The American Convention of Abolition Societies 1794-1829

The American Convention

FOR PROMOTING THE

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

AND IMPROVING

THE CONDITION OF

THE AFRICAN RACE

Minutes, Constitution, Addresses,
Memorials, Resolutions, Reports,
Committees and Anti-Slavery Tracts

Complete and Unabridged in Three Volumes

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Introduction

The American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery and Improving the Condition of the African Race was the major national organization working for Negro emancipation during the years 1794-1829.

The American Convention was a loose, decentralized organization, its membership being made up of those local and statewide anti-slavery societies that were willing, in any given year, to send a delegation to the convention. There were twenty-four conventions held between 1794 and 1829. Anti-slavery societies from New York and Pennsylvania almost always sent delegations; New Jersey and Delaware organizations often did; Virginia, Maryland, Tennessee and Rhode Island sometimes took part. All told, anti-slavery societies from eleven different states were represented at one time or another, and societies from several other states sent communications to the convention, although no delegates.

The Convention was originally called "the American Convention of Delegates from Abolition Societies established in Different Parts of the United States." The Constitution adopted in 1801 made *The American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery and Improving the Condition of the African*

Race the official title, and it came into usage in 1804. In spite of its name, up until 1821 the American Convention was concerned mainly with the improvement of the conditions of slaves and the protection of freed slaves. After 1821, however, emancipation became the organization's goal, although the American Convention invariably recommended education of slaves before any mass emancipation.

Due to the decentralized nature of the American Convention, its activities were limited. It could not demand from the individual anti-slavery societies to follow any precise policy, and it could not require the societies to contribute dues. The organization subsisted on the voluntary contributions of the participating societies. This is not to say that the American Convention did not play an effective role in anti-slavery activities. It published and circulated anti-slavery tracts; it petitioned the Congress and State legislatures; it prepared guidelines for the individual societies; it gathered information on state laws relating to slavery, the slave trade (both foreign and domestic), and black codes. It prepared and published "Addresses" to the people of the United States, and it served as a national forum where local anti-slavery societies would meet and discuss common problems, hear of one another's activities, etc. An Acting Committee, which functioned between conventions, carried out the activities decided upon at each convention, such as printing and distributing pamphlets, submitting petitions, etc.

As Alice Adams said (in "The Neglected Period of Anti-Slavery in America, 1808-1831"), "it served a good end during its existence, especially as it held the societies together during the transition period, before the introduction of more centralized methods of work. The addresses sent out served the purpose of keeping alive in the minds of people the fact that there was an evil which it was their duty to combat and that there was a society through which they would work. It scattered anti-slavery literature over the country and rendered it possible for everyone to possess ample knowledge of the needs of the cause, and of what was being done by the leaders." (p. 192)

The American Convention also served as a counterweight to the various colonization societies that were active in the first three decades of the nineteenth century. The American Convention rejected the deportation of Negroes to Africa as a solution, and instead sought to make the Negro a free, educated participant in American society. To this end it strongly advocated the setting up of schools for free Negroes by the local abolition societies.

The minutes of the American Convention (totaling 1,140 pages) provide a valuable storehouse of information about anti-slavery during the years 1794-1829. Not only do they contain the texts of addresses that the American Convention published and petitions that it presented to Congress and state legislatures, but also reports on the activities of various abolition societies, studies of the status of the American Negro,

and the texts of the many different emancipation plans. In the recommendations sent out by the American Convention to the independent societies, a precise picture of the pattern and state of anti-slavery thinking can be obtained.

With the founding of the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1831, interest in the American Convention waned. No conventions were held between 1830 and 1837. In 1838, delegations from Pennsylvania, New York and Delaware met and officially dissolved the American Convention.

*

An extensive search of library holdings failed to locate a complete collection of the societies' minutes. The unavailability of such a complete collection at any one place led the publishers of these reprints to call upon the cooperation of the Rare Book divisions of the Brown University, the New York Public Library, the Columbia University and the Library of Congress. We wish to thank these institutions for their help.

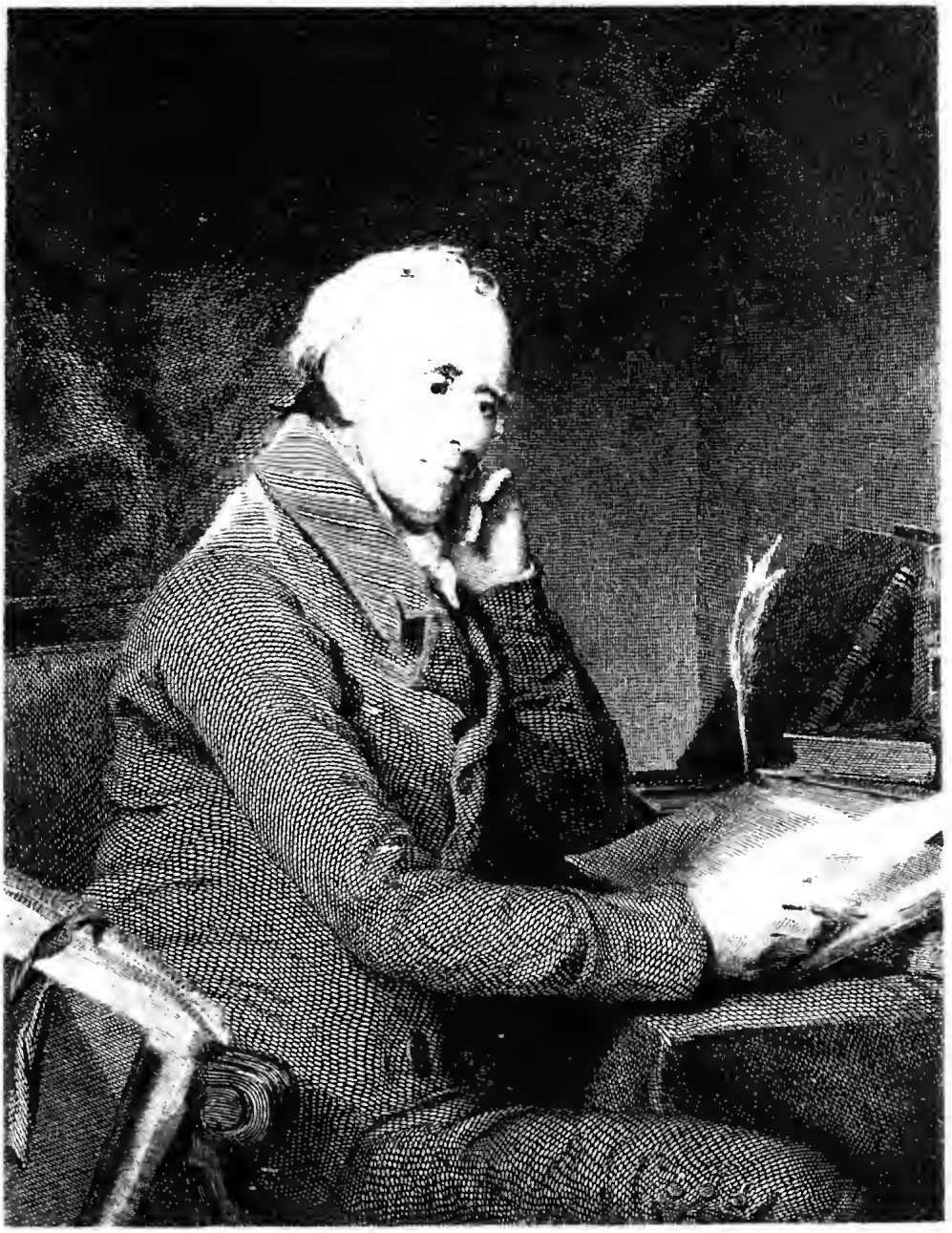
Minutes of
The
American Convention
for Promoting the
Abolition of Slavery
and Improving the
Condition of the
African Race

Volume One:
First to Tenth Convention
1794-1805

Benjamin Rush, M.D.
(1745?–1813)

Founder of the first American
anti-slavery society
and several times president of
the American Convention

Dr. Rush was also a signer of the
Declaration of Independence,
a member of the Continental Congress
and surgeon general of the Continental army



From a painting by T. Sully
Courtesy of New York Public Library, Picture Collection

Benjamin Rush

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MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF A

Convention of Delegates

FROM THE

ABOLITION SOCIETIES

Eſtabliſhed in different Parts of the United States,

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE FIRST DAY OF JANUARY, ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-FOUR, AND CONTINUED, BY ADJOURNMENTS, UNTIL THE SEVENTH DAY OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY ZACHARIAH POULSON, JUNR. NUMBER EIGHTY, CHESNUT-STREET, EIGHT DOORS BELOW THIRD-STREET.

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MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF A

Convention of Delegates.

IN Convention of Delegates, from the Societies eſtabliſhed, in different parts of the United States, for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, aſſembled at the City Hall, in the city of Philadelphia, January 1, 1794, it appeared, by the credentials delivered in, that the following perſons had been duly appointed to repreſent their reſpective Societies in this Convention:

Connecticut Society.

Uriah Tracy.

New-York Society.

Peter Jay Munro,
Moſes Rogers,
Thomas Franklin, junior,
William Dunlap.

New-Jerſey Society.

Joſeph Bloomfield,
William Coxe, junior,
John Wiſtar,
Robert Pearſon,
Franklin Davenport.

Pennſylvania Society.

William Rogers,
William Rawle,
Samuel Powel Griffitts,
Robert Patterſon,
Samuel Coates,
Benjamin Ruſh.

Delaware Society.

Warner Mifflin,
Iſaiah Rowland,
Joſeph Hodgſon,
John Pemberton.

Wilmington Society (ſtate of Delaware.)

Joſeph Warner,
Iſaac H. Starr,
Robert Coram.

Maryland Society.

Samuel Sterett,
James Wincheſter,
Joſeph Townſend,
Adam Fonerdon,
Jeſſe Hollingſworth.

Cheſter-town Society (ſtate of Maryland.)

Joſeph Wilkinſon,
James Maſlin,
Abraham Ridgely.

Of whom the following appeared and took their ſeats, *viz.*

Uriah Tracy,
Thomas Franklin, junior,
William Dunlap,
Joſeph Bloomfield,
William Coxe, junior,
Robert Pearſon,
William Rogers,
William Rawle,
Samuel Powel Griffitts.
Robert Patterſon,
Samuel Coates,
Benjamin Ruſh,
Warner Mifflin,
Iſaiah Rowland,
Joſeph Hodgſon,
John Pemberton,
Joſeph Warner,
Iſaac H. Starr,
Samuel Sterett,
Joſeph Townſend,
Joſeph Wilkinſon,
Abraham Ridgely.

Joſeph Bloomfield was elected Preſident of the Convention.

John M'Cree, one of the Secretaries of the Pennſylvania Abolition Society, was appointed Secretary, and Joſeph Fry, Doorkeeper.

Agreed, That all queſtions, which ſhall come before this Convention, be decided by a majority of the votes of the members preſent.

Benjamin Ruſh, William Dunlap, Samuel Sterett, William Rawle, and Warner Mifflin, were appointed a committee to report the objects proper for the conſideration of this Convention, and the beſt plan for carrying the ſame into execution.

Adjourned.

JANUARY SECOND.

Adam Fonerdon and Jeſſe Hollingſworth, two of the Delegates from the Maryland Society, appeared and took their ſeats.

Abſalom Baird, delegated to repreſent the Waſhington Society in Pennſylvania, appeared, produced his credentials, and took his ſeat.

A letter, directed to the Convention, from Robert Pleaſants, Chairman of the committee of correſpondence of the Virginia Society, was preſented and read. By this letter it appears, that Samuel Pleaſants and Iſrael Pleaſants, of the city of Philadelphia, were appointed to repreſent that Society, in this

Convention; or, in caſe of their declining or being prevented from acting, the Convention were left at liberty to nominate two other members as their repreſentatives.

Whereupon,

Reſolved, That as information, and an unreſerved compariſon of one another's ſentiments, relative to the important cauſe in which we are ſeverally engaged, are our principal objects; and as the perſons appointed by the Virginia Society, are not citizens of that ſtate, nor members of that Society—to admit them, or, according to their propoſal, for us to elect others as their repreſentatives, would be highly improper.

In this letter was encloſed an authentic account of ſeveral veſſels lately fitted out in Virginia, for the African ſlave-trade.

The Preſident was directed to acknowledge the receipt of this letter, to inform the Virginia Society of the reſolution of the Convention thereon, and to thank them for the above intereſting information.

Benjamin Ruſh, from the committee appointed to bring in a report on the objects proper for the conſideration of this Convention, and the beſt plan for carrying the ſame into execution, produced one, which being conſidered and amended, was adopted as follows, *viz.*

Firſt, That a memorial be preſented to Congreſs, praying that Body to prohibit, by law, the citizens of the United States, from carrying on a commerce, in ſlaves, for the ſupply of foreign nations; and, alſo, to prohibit foreigners from fitting their ſhips in the ports of the United States, for the purpoſe of carrying on the ſlave-trade.

Second, That memorials and petitions be preſented to the Legiſlatures of ſuch of the ſtates as have not yet paſſed laws to prohibit the importation of ſlaves—to enact laws for that purpoſe; and, alſo, to the Legiſlatures of the individual ſtates—to prevent ſlaves from being forcibly carried away; and to grant to ſuch of them as have been, or may be emancipated, ſuch a participation in civil privileges, as, by the diffuſion of knowledge among them, they may, from time to time, be qualified to enjoy.

Third, That addreſſes be ſent to the different Abolition Societies, recommending to them to continue their zeal and exertions, in behalf of ſuch of our African brethren as are yet in bondage; alſo, to uſe their utmoſt endeavours to have the children of the free and other Africans, inſtructed in common literature—in the principles of virtue and religion, and afterwards in uſeful mechanical arts; thereby to prepare them for becoming good citizens of the United States.

Fourth, That an addreſs be written, and publiſhed to the citizens of the United States, to impreſs upon them, in the moſt forcible manner, the obligations of juſtice, humanity and benevolence towards our African brethren, whether in bondage or free, and to requeſt their concurrence with us in all the objects of the preſent Convention.

Fifth, That it be recommended to the different Abolition Societies, to appoint Delegates to meet in Convention, at Philadelphia, on the firſt Wedneſday of January, 1795, and on the ſame day, in every year afterwards, until the great objects of their original aſſociation be accompliſhed.

The following committees were then appointed, *viz.*

William Rawle, William Rogers, and William Dunlap, to prepare a memorial to Congreſs, as propoſed in the firſt ſection of the above report.

Samuel Sterett, William Rawle, and William Dunlap, to prepare memorials to the different Legiſlatures, as propoſed in the ſecond ſection.

Samuel P. Griffitts, William Coxe, junior, and Abraham Ridgely, to prepare addreſſes to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, as propoſed in the third ſection.

Benjamin Ruſh, Warner Mifflin, and Iſaac H. Starr, to prepare an addreſs to the citizens of the United States, as propoſed in the fourth ſection.

Adjourned.

JANUARY THIRD.

Samuel Sterett, from the committee appointed to prepare memorials to the Legiſlatures of the different ſtates, preſented two eſſays; one to be preſented to the Legiſlatures of ſuch of the ſtates, as have not paſſed laws to prohibit the importation of ſlaves; and the other to be preſented to the Legiſlatures of the individual ſtates, who have not aboliſhed domeſtic ſlavery; which were read, and ordered to lie on the table.

Adjourned.

JANUARY FOURTH.

Samuel P. Griffitts, from the committee appointed for the purpoſe, reported an addreſs to the different Abolition Societies; which was read, and ordered to lie on the table.

Benjamin Ruſh, from the committee appointed for the purpoſe, reported an addreſs to the citizens of the United States; which was read, and ordered to lie on the table.

The memorial, addreſſed to the ſtates who have not enacted laws to prohibit the importation of ſlaves, was read a ſecond time, and, being conſidered, was, after ſome amendments, agreed to as follows, *viz.*

To the *of the*
State of

The memorial and petition of the Delegates, from the ſeveral Societies, formed in different parts of the United States, for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, in Convention aſſembled at Philadelphia, on the firſt day of January, 1794.

Reſpectfully ſhew,

THAT, actuated by a deſire to vindicate the honour of the United States, the rights of man, and the dignity of human nature, the Abolition Societies, in various and diſtant parts of the Union, have delegated your memorialiſts, to conſider of, and endeavour to promote, ſuch plans as may tend to diminiſh the number of ſlaves in the United States, meliorate their ſituation, and eventually eradicate an evil, entailed upon us by our anceſtors; which muſt, as long as it exiſts, be conſidered as a diſhonourable ſtain upon a country, the baſis of whoſe political happineſs is man's equal rights.

We, therefore, earneſtly entreat you, to take into conſideration the propriety and ne-

ceſſity of enacting laws, to prohibit the importation of ſlaves into your ſtate, from any foreign country, or from any neighbouring ſtate.

We preſume not here to expatiate, to the Repreſentatives of an enlightened people, on the injuſtice, immorality, and dreadful tendency of the ſlave-trade; fully perſuaded that men, in your reſpectable ſituation, are thinking men, and that all who reflect on this ſubject muſt have been long convinced of theſe truths. But, Gentlemen, the evil exiſts, and ſurely it is well worthy of your conſideration; it is an evil of great magnitude, and to prevent its growth, and gradually to deſtroy it, is an object of weighty import.

Permit us then reſpectfully to ſuggeſt, that the firſt ſtep to be taken is to prohibit an accumulation of the evil, by any further importation. Many of your ſiſter ſtates have adopted this meaſure, and have not found any diſadvantages ariſing therefrom. On the contrary, they have ſhewn their approbation of the meaſure, on trial, by enacting ſubſequent laws, giving to the firſt additional force and efficacy.

Your memorialiſts therefore hope, that, on conſideration, you will add your ſtate to the number of thoſe which prohibit the importation of ſlaves; and thus contribute to aboliſh a practice, no leſs deſtructive to the intereſts of the United States, than to the general cauſe of humanity.

Inſtead of the laſt paragraph, the following was agreed to be ſubſtituted in the memorial to be preſented to the Legiſlature of South Carolina, *viz.*

Your memorialiſts therefore hope, that, on conſideration, you will make perpetual the law which you have already enacted for the above purpoſe; thereby adding your ſtate to the number of thoſe which totally prohibit the importation of ſlaves, and thus contribute to aboliſh a practice, no leſs deſtructive to the intereſts of the United States, than to the general cauſe of humanity.

The memorial addreſſed to the individual ſtates, who have not yet aboliſhed domeſtic ſlavery, was read a ſecond time; and, being conſidered and amended, was agreed to as follows, *viz.*

To the *of the*
State of

The memorial and petition of the Delegates from the ſeveral Societies, formed in different parts of the United States, for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, in Convention aſſembled at Philadelphia, on the firſt day of January, 1794.

Reſpectfully ſhew,

THAT, having been appointed and convened for the general purpoſes of conſidering and endeavouring to ſuggeſt the moſt

eligible plans for promoting the abolition of ſlavery; and, where its ſuppreſſion cannot be obtained, to effect its alleviation, they have been unavoidably led to contemplate, how much remains in the power of the Legiſlature to perform.

It has, therefore, become their duty, reſpectfully to repreſent to your Houſe, ſome of thoſe evils which are ſtill permitted to continue; and, in the name of fellow-men, to ſolicit its protection, its aſſiſtance, and its juſtice.

Some of the principal evils, foremoſt in the group of calamities, incident to the practice of ſlavery, your memorialiſts take the liberty of ſpecifying.

Negroes, conſidered merely as ſubjects of property, are frequently carried off, by force, from their deareſt connections, and tranſported to places, where even the ſeverity of their former bondage is encreaſed; where a new climate, rigid laws, and deſpotic manners, render their deſpair complete.

As ſubjects of property, they likewiſe become the objects of plunder; and the evils already mentioned, are aggravated by the violence with which they are executed.

Until a radical abolition of ſlavery itſelf, by exploding the general opinion, that the colour of a man is evidence of his deprivation of the rights of man, ſhall afford more

effectual ſecurity, it is preſumed, that the legiſlative protection of abſolute prohibitions, and of adequate penalties, may be reaſonably expected.

The voice of reaſon, and the impulſe of humanity, always at war with injuſtice, gradually tend to the emancipation of ſlaves; but laws, often made in earlier times, or for different objects, occaſionally interpoſe between the intention and the act. To enumerate thoſe obſtacles to individual emancipation which ſtill remain, ſometimes obvious, and ſometimes concealed in the maſs of municipal regulations, would exceed the reaſonable bounds of the preſent application; but, with a knowledge of their exiſtence, and a ſenſe of their injuſtice, your memorialiſts reſpectfully unite a requeſt, that individual emancipation may, if not promoted by encouragements, at leaſt be relieved from incidental penalties.

Yet, in breaking the fetters, and removing the ſorrows of ſlavery, what do we effect, if the new-made man is relieved from the power of one, only to be ſenſible of his hopeleſs inferiority to all? As the opinions of men continue to be regulated, we know, that the negro has little to expect from the diſtribution of public functions;—ſtill there are certain rights, not privileges, certain claims, not favours, to which, we conceive, legiſlative juſtice might ſafely admit him.

Of what uſe is his hard-earned property, if the law does not ſpread its defence around him? Or, how is his liberty ſecured, if he loſes little more than the name of a ſlave? Donations ſo ineffectual, and benevolence ſo incomplete, can only excite diſſatisfaction, and ſuppreſs induſtry. To acquire an uſeful member of the community, we ſhould hold up to his view a participation in its privileges. We promote induſtry, by rewarding it, and encourage knowledge, by rendering it the means of perceiving happineſs.

In addition to the objects already mentioned, your memorialiſts, therefore, reſpectfully ſolicit the Legiſlature to grant to ſuch as have been, or may be emancipated, ſuch a participation in civil privileges, as, by the diffuſion of knowledge among them, they may, from time to time, be qualified to enjoy.

Inſtead of the three laſt paragraphs, the following was agreed to be ſubſtituted, in the memorial to be preſented to the ſeveral Legiſlatures of the ſtates of Delaware, New-Jerſey, New-York, Connecticut, and Rhode-Iſland, *viz.*

Our preſent application to the Legiſlature of terminates with theſe requeſts:

We have obſerved, and we acknowledge, with pleaſure, the liberality of its conſtitution, and the humanity of its laws.

As the prejudices, which thofe laws were originally intended to combat, are gradually difpelled, their ufeful effects will become more obvious and permanent. Liberality and humanity will extend from the archives of your ftate to the practice of your citizens. It will be confeffed, that none of your provifions, avowing and fecuring the rights of fellow-creatures, ought to excite repentance or difcourage imitation. It will be found, that an increafe of the ufeful qualities of the African citizen, will keep pace with the kindnefs and protection of which he partakes; and, in future, the dignified office of the Legiflature, will not be to repeal or reftrain, but to enlarge and enforce, the provifions in his favour.

And in the memorial to be prefented to the Legiflature of the ftate of Pennfylvania, the following paragraph was agreed to be fubftituted, *viz.*

To the Legiflature of *that ftate* which, in favour of the unhappy African, firft difpelled the clouds of prejudice, and firft extended the hand of conſolation, no further requeft, on our part, at prefent, remains. We have obferved, and we acknowledge with pleafure, the liberality of its conftitution, and the humanity of its laws. We have feen that the effect

of none of their proviſions, avowing and ſecuring the rights of fellow-creatures, has excited repentance, or diſcouraged imitation; we have witneſſed an increaſe of the uſeful qualities in the African citizen, keeping pace with the kindneſs and protection of which he partakes; and we have found the legiſlative attention employed, not in repealing and reſtraining, but in enlarging and enforcing, its former proviſions in his favour.

JANUARY SIXTH.

William Rogers, from the committee appointed for the purpoſe, reported a memorial to Congreſs, which was read, and ordered to lie on the table.

The addreſs to the Abolition Societies was read a ſecond time, and, being conſidered and amended, was agreed to as follows, *viz.*

To the Society for promoting the abolition of Slavery, &c.

IT is with peculiar pleaſure we inform you, that the Convention of Delegates, from moſt of the Abolition Societies formed in the United States, met in this city, have, with much unanimity, gone through the buſineſs which came before them. The advantages to be derived from this meeting are ſo evi-

dent, that we have agreed earneſtly to recommend to you, that a ſimilar meeting be annually convened, until the great object of our aſſociation—the liberty of our fellowmen—ſhall be fully and unequivocally eſtabliſhed.

To obtain this important end, we conceive that it is proper, conſtantly to have in view the neceſſity of uſing our utmoſt and unremitting endeavours to aboliſh ſlavery, and to protect and meliorate the condition of the enſlaved, and of the emancipated. The irreſiſtible, though ſilent progreſs of the principles of true philoſophy, will do much for us; but, placed in a ſituation well adapted to promote theſe principles, it ſurely becomes us to improve every occaſion of forwarding the great deſigns of our inſtitutions. For this purpoſe, we think it proper to requeſt you to unite with us, in the moſt ſtrenuous exertions, to effect a compliance with the laws in favour of emancipation; and, where theſe laws are deficient, reſpectful applications to the State-Legiſlatures ſhould not be diſcontinued, however unſucceſsful they may prove. —Let us remember, for our conſolation and encouragement in theſe caſes, that, although intereſt and prejudice may oppoſe, yet the fundamental principles of our government, as well as the progreſſive and rapid influence of reaſon and religion, are in our favour—

and let us never be diſcouraged by a fear of the event, from performing any taſk of duty, when clearly pointed out; for it is an undoubted truth—that no good effort can ever be entirely loſt.

While contemplating the great principles of our aſſociations, we cannot refrain from recommending to your attention the propriety of uſing your endeavours to form, as circumſtances may require, Abolition Societies in your own, and in the neighbouring ſtates; as, for want of the concurrence of others, the good intentions and efforts of many an honeſt and zealous individual, are often defeated.

But, while we wiſh to draw your attention to theſe objects, there is another which we cannot paſs over. We are all too much accuſtomed to the reproaches of the enemies of our cauſe, on the ſubject of the ignorance and crimes of the Blacks, not to wiſh that they were ill-founded. And though, to us, it is ſufficiently apparent, that this ignorance, and theſe crimes, are owing to the degrading ſtate of ſlavery; yet, may we not, with confidence, attempt to do away the reproach?—Let us uſe our endeavours to have the children of the emancipated, and even of the enſlaved Africans, inſtructed in common literature—in the principles of virtue and religion, and in thoſe mechanic arts which will

keep them moſt conſtantly employed, and, of courſe, will leſs ſubject them to idleneſs and debauchery; and thus prepare them for becoming good citizens of the United States: a privilege and elevation to which we look forward with pleaſure, and which we believe can be beſt merited by habits of induſtry and virtue.

We ſhall tranſmit you an exact copy of our proceedings, with the different memorials and addreſſes which to us have appeared neceſſary at this time; and would recommend to you the propriety of giving full powers to the Delegates who are to meet in the year 1795; believing, that the buſineſs of that Convention will be rendered more eaſy and more extenſively uſeful, if you ſend, by your Repreſentatives, certified copies of the conſtitution and laws of your Society, and of all the laws exiſting in your ſtate concerning ſlavery, with ſuch facts relative to this buſineſs, as may aſcertain the reſpective ſituation of ſlavery, and of the Blacks in general.

The addreſs to the citizens of the United States was read a ſecond time, and, being conſidered and amended, was agreed to as follows, *viz.*

To the Citizens of the United States.

The addreſs of the Delegates from the ſeveral Societies, formed in different parts of the United States, for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, in Convention aſſembled at Philadelphia, on the firſt day of January, 1794.

Friends and Fellow-citizens,

UNITED to you by the ties of citizenſhip, and partakers with you of the bleſſings of a free government, we take the liberty of addreſſing you upon a ſubject, highly intereſting to the credit and proſperity of the United States.

It is the glory of our country to have originated a ſyſtem of oppoſition to the commerce in that part of our fellow-creatures, who compoſe the nations of Africa.

Much has been done by the citizens of ſome of the ſtates to aboliſh this diſgraceful traffic, and to improve the condition of thoſe unhappy people, whom the ignorance, or the avarice of our anceſtors had bequeathed to us as ſlaves; but the evil ſtill continues, and our country is yet diſgraced by laws and practices, which level the creature man with a part of the brute creation.

Many reaſons concur in perſuading us to aboliſh domeſtic ſlavery in our country.

It is inconſiſtent with the ſafety of the liberties of the United States.

Freedom and ſlavery cannot long exiſt together. An unlimited power over the time, labour, and poſterity of our fellow-creatures, neceſſarily unfits men for diſcharging the public and private duties of citizens of a republic.

It is inconſiſtent with ſound policy; in expoſing the ſtates which permit it, to all thoſe evils which inſurrections, and the moſt reſentful war have introduced into one of the richeſt iſlands in the Weſt-Indies.

It is unfriendly to the preſent exertions of the inhabitants of Europe, in favour of liberty. What people will advocate freedom, with a zeal proportioned to its bleſſings, while they view the pureſt republic in the world tolerating in its boſom a body of ſlaves?

In vain has the tyranny of kings been rejected, while we permit in our country a domeſtic deſpotiſm, which involves, in its nature, moſt of the vices and miſeries that we have endeavoured to avoid.

It is degrading to our rank as men in the ſcale of being. Let us uſe our reaſon and ſocial affections for the purpoſes for which they were given, or ceaſe to boaſt a pre-eminence over animals, that are unpolluted with our crimes.

But higher motives to juſtice and humanity towards our fellow-creatures remain yet to be mentioned.

Domeſtic ſlavery is repugnant to the principles of Chriſtianity. It proſtrates every benevolent and juſt principle of action in the human heart. It is rebellion againſt the authority of a common FATHER. It is a practical denial of the extent and efficacy of the death of a common SAVIOUR. It is an uſurpation of the prerogative of the GREAT SOVEREIGN of the univerſe, who has ſolemnly claimed an excluſive property in the ſouls of men.

But if this view of the enormity of the evil of domeſtic ſlavery ſhould not affect us, there is one conſideration more which ought to alarm and impreſs us, eſpecially at the preſent juncture.

It is a violation of a divine precept of univerſal juſtice, which has, in no inſtance, eſcaped with impunity.

The crimes of nations, as well as of individuals, are often deſignated in their puniſhments; and we conceive it to be no forced conſtruction, of ſome of the calamities which now diſtreſs or impend our country, to believe that they are the meaſure of evils, which we have meted to others.

The ravages committed upon many of our fellow-citizens by the Indians, and the depredations upon the liberty and commerce of

others of the citizens of the United States by the Algerines, both unite in proclaiming to us, in the moſt forcible language, " to looſe the bands of wickedneſs, to break every yoke, to undo heavy burthens, and to let the oppreſſed go free."

We ſhall conclude this addreſs by recommending to you,

Firſt, To refrain immediately from that ſpecies of rapine and murder which has improperly been ſoftened with the name of the African trade. It is Indian cruelty, and Algerine piracy, in another form.

Secondly, To form Societies, in every ſtate, for the purpoſe of promoting the abolition of the ſlave-trade, of domeſtic ſlavery, the relief of perſons unlawfully held in bondage, and for the improvement of the condition of Africans, and their deſcendants amongſt us.

The Societies, which we repreſent, have beheld, with triumph, the ſucceſs of their exertions, in many inſtances, in favour of their African brethren; and, in a full reliance upon the continuance of divine ſupport and direction, they humbly hope, their labours will never ceaſe, while there exiſts a ſingle ſlave in the United States.

JANUARY SEVENTH.

The memorial to Congreſs was read a ſecond time, and, being conſidered and amended, was agreed to as follows, *viz.*

To the Senate and Houſe of Repreſentatives of the United States in Congreſs aſſembled.

The memorial and petition of the Delegates from the ſeveral Societies, formed in different parts of the United States, for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, in Convention aſſembled at Philadelphia, on the firſt day of January, 1794.

Reſpectfully ſhew,

THAT your memorialiſts, having been appointed, by various Societies, in different parts of the Union, for the benevolent purpoſe of endeavouring to alleviate or ſuppreſs ſome of the miſeries of their fellow-creatures, deem it their duty to approach the Congreſs of the United States with a reſpectful repreſentation of certain evils,—the unauthoriſed acts of a few, but injurious to the intereſt and reputation of all.

America, dignified by being the firſt in modern times, to aſſert and defend the equal rights of man, ſuffers her fame to be tarniſhed, and her example to be weakened, by a cruel

commerce, carried on from ſome of her ports, for the ſupply of foreign nations with African ſlaves.

To enumerate the horrors incident to this inhuman traffic, of which all the worſt paſſions of mankind form the principal materials, would be unneceſſary, when we offer to prove its exiſtence.

Nor is it requiſite to conſume much of your valuable time in the endeavour to prove it a national injury.

While it expoſes the lives and the morals of our ſeamen to peculiar danger, it renders all complaints of retaliation unjuſt; for thoſe who deprive others of their liberty, for the benefit of foreign countries, cannot reaſonably murmur, if, by other foreign nations, they are deprived of their own.

True it is, that the captivity at Algiers is not without a hope, and that the ſlavery of the Weſt-Indies terminates only with exiſtence; but, in proportion as that to which we are acceſſary is more ſevere, the duty of deſiſting from it becomes more urgent.

Your memorialiſts obſerve, and mention with pleaſure, that this venal cruelty is at preſent confined to a few ports, and a few perſons. Hence it becomes more eaſy to deſtroy a degrading exception from the general

dignity of our commerce, and to reſtore our citizens to their former fame, of preferring the ſpirit of freedom to the deluſions of intereſt.

An additional reaſon for the legiſlative interference, now requeſted, ariſes from the natural conſequence of the facts already ſuggeſted.

Foreigners, ſeduced by the example, and believing that they may commit without reproach, what American citizens commit with impunity, avail themſelves of our ports to fit out their veſſels for the ſame traffic. Thus we become the accomplices of their offences, and partake of the guilt without the miſerable conſolation of ſharing its profits.

Your memorialiſts, therefore, truſting that a compliance with their requeſt, will not exceed the conſtitutional powers of Congreſs, nor injure the intereſts or diſturb the tranquillity of any part of the Union, reſpectfully pray, that a law may be paſſed, prohibiting the traffic carried on by citizens of the United States for the ſupply of ſlaves to foreign nations, and preventing foreigners from fitting out veſſels for the ſlave-trade in the ports of the United States.

Reſolved, That the Preſident do tranſmit to Granville Sharpe, Chairman of the Committee of the London Society, formed for

the purpoſe of effecting the abolition of the ſlave-trade, a copy of the proceedings of this Convention.

That the addreſs directed to be preſented to Congreſs, be ſigned by the Preſident of this Convention, and atteſted by the Secretary; and that the ſame be tranſmitted, by the Preſident, to the Speaker of the Houſe of Repreſentatives.

That the addreſſes to the ſeveral Legiſlatures, be ſigned and atteſted as above mentioned; and be tranſmitted to the reſpective Preſidents, or Speakers, of one branch of the Legiſlature, or laid before the reſpective Houſes, in ſuch manner as the Preſident of this Convention ſhall find expedient.

That the addreſs to the people of the United States, be ſigned and atteſted as above mentioned; and that the ſame be publiſhed in one or more of the news-papers in each ſtate; and that Uriah Tracy, William Dunlap, William Coxe, junior, Samuel Coates, Joſeph Warner, Abraham Ridgley, and Joſeph Townſend, be a committee to procure the publication thereof, and to tranſmit the addreſſes to the Abolition Societies.

That one thouſand five hundred copies of the minutes and proceedings of the Convention be printed; that one hundred copies be ſent to each of the Abolition Societies now eſtabliſhed; and that Samuel Coates, Samuel

P. Griffitts, and Robert Patterſon, be a committee to ſuperintend the publication and diſtribution of the proceedings of this Convention.

Publiſhed by order of the Convention,

JOHN M'CREE, *Secretary.*

Philadelphia, January 7th. 1794.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE SECOND

Convention of Delegates

FROM THE

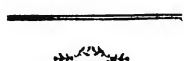
ABOLITION SOCIETIES

Eſtabliſhed in different Parts of the United States,

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE SEVENTH DAY OF JANUARY, ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-FIVE, AND CONTINUED, BY ADJOURNMENTS, UNTIL THE FOURTEENTH DAY OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.



PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY ZACHARIAH POULSON, JUNR. NUMBER EIGHTY, CHESNUT-STREET, EIGHT DOORS BELOW THIRD-STREET,

M DCC XCV.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE SECOND

Convention of Delegates.

Philadelphia, Wednesday, January 7th. 1795.

AGREEABLY to the recommendation of the Convention, held in this city last year, a number of Delegates, from the several Abolition Societies in the United States, assembled, this day, at the City Hall, when, by the credentials produced, it appeared, that the following persons had been chosen to represent their respective Societies in this Convention:

Connecticut Society.

Jonathan Edwards,
Uriah Tracy,
Zephaniah Swift.

New-York Society.

John Murray, junior,
William Johnſon,
Lawrence Embree,
William Dunlap,
William Walton Woolſey.

Pennſylvania Society.

William Rawle,
Robert Patterſon,
Benjamin Ruſh,
Samuel Coates,
Caſpar Wiſtar,
James Todd,
Benjamin Say.

Delaware Society.

Richard Baſſett,
John Ralſton,
Allen M'Lane,
Caleb Boyer.

Wilmington Society (ſtate of Delaware.)

Cyrus Newlin,
James A. Byard,
Joſeph Warner,
William Poole.

Maryland Society.

Samuel Sterett,
Adam Fonerdon,
Joſeph Townſend,

Joſeph Thornburgh,
George Buchanan,
John Bankſon,
Philip Moore.

Cheſter-town Society (ſtate of Maryland.)
Edward Scott,
James Houſton.

Of whom the following appeared and took their ſeats, *viz.*

Jonathan Edwards,
Uriah Tracy,
Zephaniah Swift,
William Johnſon,
Lawrence Embree,
William Dunlap,
William Walton Woolſey,
William Rawle,
Robert Patterſon,
Benjamin Ruſh,
Samuel Coates,
Caſpar Wiſtar,
James Todd,
Benjamin Say,
Richard Baſſett,
Caleb Boyer,
Cyrus Newlin,
Joſeph Warner,
Samuel Sterett,
Joſeph Townſend,
Joſeph Thornburgh,

John Bankſon,
Philip Moore,
Edward Scott,
James Houſton.

The Convention proceeded to the election of a Preſident, and, on counting the ballots, it appeared, that Benjamin Ruſh was duly elected.

Walter Franklin, one of the Secretaries of the Pennſylvania Abolition Society, was appointed Secretary, and Joſeph Fry, Doorkeeper.

Agreed, That all queſtions, which ſhall come before this Convention, be decided by a majority of the votes of the members preſent, and that every motion, when ſeconded, ſhall, if required by the Preſident, or any member, be reduced to writing.

The addreſs, from the laſt Convention, to the different Abolition Societies in the United States, was then read; after which, ſeveral written and verbal communications were made.

Jonathan Edwards, William Dunlap, Caſpar Wiſtar, Cyrus Newlin, Caleb Boyer, Philip Moore, and James Houſton, were appointed a committee to conſider of, and report, the objects proper for the attention of this Convention, and the moſt ſuitable means of attaining the ſame.

Ordered, That the ſeveral communications, made this evening, be referred to the above committee, and that the members of the Convention be requeſted to impart to them ſuch information as they may poſſeſs, relative to the object of their appointment.

Adjourned till to-morrow evening at five o'clock.

January 8th. 1795.

The Convention met.

Preſent—Jonathan Edwards, Uriah Tracy, Zephaniah Swift, William Johnſon, Lawrence Embree, William Dunlap, William Walton Woolſey, William Rawle, Robert Patterſon, Samuel Coates, Caſpar Wiſtar, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Richard Baſſett, Caleb Boyer, Cyrus Newlin, Joſeph Warner, Joſeph Townſend, Joſeph Thornburgh, John Bankſon, Philip Moore, Edward Scott, James Houſton.

The Preſident being abſent, Uriah Tracy was appointed to preſide for the evening.

An extract, from the minutes of the proceedings of a general meeting of the New Jerſey Abolition Society, was read, by which it appeared, that Joſeph Bloomfield, William Coxe, junior, James Sloan, John Wiſtar, and Franklin Davenport, were elected to repreſent that Society in this Convention, of whom, William Coxe, junior, James Sloan, and Franklin Davenport, appeared and took their ſeats.

The committee, appointed at the laſt meeting, not being prepared to make a final report, were continued.

Several communications, from the New Jerſey Society, were preſented by their Delegates, and referred to the ſaid committee.

Adjourned till to-morrow afternoon at five o'clock.

January 9th. 1795.

The Convention met.

Preſent—Jonathan Edwards, Uriah Tracy, Zephaniah Swift, William Johnſon, Lawrence Embree, William Dunlap, William Walton Woolſey, William Coxe, junior, James Sloan, Franklin Davenport, William Rawle, Robert Patterſon, Benjamin Ruſh, Samuel Coates, Caſpar Wiſtar, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Richard Baſſett, Caleb Boyer, Cyrus Newlin, Joſeph Warner, Samuel Sterett, Joſeph Townſend, Joſeph Thornburgh, John Bankſon, Philip Moore, Edward Scott, James Houſton.

A letter, from the Preſident of the Providence Abolition Society, was read; by which it appeared, that Theodore Foſter and George Benſon were appointed to repreſent that Society in this Convention.

A letter, from the Waſhington Abolition Society in Pennſylvania, was, alſo, read, notifying the appointment of Thomas Scott,

Abſalom Baird, and Samuel Clark, as Repreſentatives of the ſaid Society, in this Convention.

The Secretary was directed to inform ſuch of thoſe gentlemen as are now in this city, of the receipt and purport of the above letters.

The Convention being informed, that the abſence of Joſeph Bloomfield, of New Jerſey, was occaſioned by ſickneſs, mention thereof was ordered to be made on the Minutes.

The committee, appointed to conſider of, and report, the objects proper for the conſideration of the Convention, and the moſt ſuitable means of attaining the ſame, made report, which, after amendment, was adopted as follows, *viz.*

Firſt, That an addreſs be made, by this Convention, to the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States, recommending to them, to ſend Deputies to a Convention, ſimilar to the preſent, to be holden in Philadelphia the firſt day of January, in the year 1796; alſo, that it be recommended to thoſe Societies, who have not ſent, to this Convention, complete copies of the laws of their ſeveral ſtates, relative to ſlavery, to ſend, to the next Convention, copies of all ſuch laws, both thoſe which are now in force, and thoſe which have been repealed; and to ſend, to the next, and every ſucceeding, Convention,

an accurate liſt of their officers for the time being, together with an account of the place of their abode, and of the offices, civil, military, or eccleſiaſtic, which they may ſuſtain, with the number of members of which they conſiſt: that it be further recommended, to the ſeveral Societies, to ſend, annually, to the Convention, an accurate liſt of all thoſe perſons who have been relieved and liberated by their agency; and, alſo, an account of ſuch trials and deciſions of courts, the general knowledge of which they ſhall judge ſubſervient to the cauſe of abolition: that it be recommended to the ſeveral Societies, to inſtitute public periodical diſcourſes, or orations, on the ſubject of ſlavery, and the means of its abolition; alſo, to continue, without remiſſion, and in ſuch ways as they ſhall, reſpectively, judge moſt likely to be ſucceſsful, their exertions to procure an amelioration of the laws of their reſpective ſtates, relative to the Blacks; and, at the ſame time, to give particular attention to the education of the black children: and, as an hiſtorical review of the legiſlative proviſions, relative to ſlavery, in the ſeveral ſtates of the Union, from their reſpective ſettlements to the preſent time, would be conducive to the general benefit,—that it be further recommended, to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, to take meaſures for procuring the materials, and promoting the publication, of ſuch a work; and

that a communication of the ſteps taken, in purſuance of this recommendation, be made to the enſuing Convention.

Second, That the Convention take into conſideration the caſe of thoſe perſons, who, having been made free by the republic of France, are ſtill holden in ſlavery by thoſe who have emigrated into the United States from the territories of the ſaid republic; and that the Convention deviſe ſome lawful meaſures for their relief:—we barely ſuggeſt, whether an application to the French ambaſſador be, or be not, proper in the caſe.

Third, That the Convention take into conſideration the means of improving the condition of the Blacks, who are, or may be, made free in the different ſtates, and of preventing the inconveniences that may ariſe from the degraded ſtate of the Negroes in the United States.

Fourth, That it be recommended, to the Society of New Jerſey, to enter on proper meaſures to procure an amendment of the law of that ſtate, prohibiting the manumiſſion of ſlaves of a greater age than thirty-five years.

William Johnſon, Franklin Davenport, and Samuel Coates, were appointed to prepare an addreſs, as propoſed in the firſt and fourth ſections of the above report.

The ſecond ſection was referred to William Walton Woolſey. William Rawle, James Todd, and Edward Scott, to report thereon.

The third ſection was referred to Lawrence Embree, Caſpar Wiſtar, Benjamin Say, Joſeph Warner, and Samuel Sterett, to report thereon.

Samuel Coates, James Sloan, and Joſeph Townſend, were appointed a committee to enquire, and report, concerning the meaſures taken, in purſuance of the ſeveral reſolutions of the former Convention, for tranſmitting memorials and addreſſes to the Congreſs of the United States, and the Legiſlatures of individual ſtates.

Adjourned till to-morrow evening at ſix o'clock.

January 10th. 1795.

The Convention met.

Preſent—Uriah Tracy, Zephaniah Swift, William Johnſon, Lawrence Embree, William Dunlap, William Walton Woolſey, James Sloan, William Rawle, Robert Patterſon, Benjamin Ruſh, Samuel Coates, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Caleb Boyer, Cyrus Newlin, Joſeph Warner, Joſeph Townſend, Joſeph Thornburgh, John Bankſon, Philip Moore, James Houſton.

Theodore Foſter, delegated to repreſent the Providence Society, appeared and took his ſeat.

The committee, to whom was referred the ſecond ſection of the report of the committee of arrangement, reported, that they had taken the ſubject into conſideration; that it appeared to them, to be within the province of the ſeveral Societies to act therein; and that the Convention ſhould recommend, to the ſaid Societies, to exert themſelves for the liberation of the perſons deſcribed in the ſaid report, ſo far as may be conſiſtent with the laws of their reſpective ſtates.

Ordered, That the ſaid report be accepted.

Adjourned till Monday evening next at ſix o'clock.

Monday evening, January 12th. 1795.

The Convention met.

Preſent—Jonathan Edwards, Zephaniah Swift, Theodore Foſter, William Dunlap, William Johnſon, Lawrence Embree, William Walton Woolſey, James Sloan, William Rawle, Robert Patterſon, Samuel Coates, Caſpar Wiſtar, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Caleb Boyer, Cyrus Newlin, Joſeph Warner, Joſeph Townſend, Joſeph Thornburgh, John Bankſon, Philip Moore, Edward Scott, James Houſton.

The Preſident being abſent, Zephaniah Swift was appointed to preſide for the evening.

The committee, appointed to enquire concerning the meaſures taken, in purſuance of the reſolutions of the former Convention, for tranſmitting memorials and addreſſes to the Congreſs of the United States, and the Legiſlatures of individual ſtates,—preſented the following report, which was read and accepted, *viz.*

The committee, appointed to enquire if the memorials to Congreſs, and the different ſtate Legiſlatures, were preſented agreeably to the order of the Convention laſt year,—report,

That the memorial was preſented to the Senate and Houſe of Repreſentatives of the United States, in Congreſs aſſembled, who took the ſame into conſideration, and granted the prayer thereof by enacting a law, of which the following is a copy:

An Act to prohibit the carrying on the Slave-trade from the United States to any foreign place or country.

Section I. BE *it enacted by the Senate and Houſe of Repreſentatives of the United States of America, in Congreſs aſſembled,* That no citizen or citizens of the United States, or foreigner, or any other

perſon coming into, or reſiding within the ſame, ſhall, for himſelf or any other perſon whatſoever, either as maſter, factor or owner, build, fit, equip, load or otherwiſe prepare any ſhip or veſſel, within any port or place of the ſaid United States, nor ſhall cauſe any ſhip or veſſel to ſail from any port or place within the ſame, for the purpoſe of carrying on any trade or traffic in ſlaves, to any foreign country; or for the purpoſe of procuring, from any foreign kingdom, place or country, the inhabitants of ſuch kingdom, place or country, to be tranſported to any foreign country, port or place whatever, to be ſold or diſpoſed of, as ſlaves: And if any ſhip or veſſel ſhall be ſo fitted out, as aforeſaid, for the ſaid purpoſes, or ſhall be cauſed to ſail, ſo as aforeſaid, every ſuch ſhip or veſſel, her tackle, furniture, apparel and other appurtenances, ſhall be forfeited to the United States; and ſhall be liable to be ſeized, proſecuted and condemned, in any of the circuit courts or diſtrict court for the diſtrict, where the ſaid ſhip or veſſel may be found and ſeized.

Section II. *And be it further enacted*, That all and every perſon, ſo building, fitting out, equipping, loading, or otherwiſe preparing, or ſending away, any ſhip or veſſel, knowing, or intending, that the ſame ſhall be employed in ſuch trade or buſineſs, contrary to the true intent and meaning of this act,

or any ways aiding or abetting therein, ſhall ſeverally forfeit and pay the ſum of two thouſand dollars, one moiety thereof, to the uſe of the United States, and the other moiety thereof, to the uſe of him or her, who ſhall ſue for and proſecute the ſame.

Section III. *And be it further enacted*, That the owner, maſter or factor of each and every foreign ſhip or veſſel, clearing out for any of the coaſts or kingdoms of Africa, or ſuſpected to be intended for the ſlave-trade, and the ſuſpicion being declared to the officer of the cuſtoms, by any citizen, on oath or affirmation, and ſuch information being to the ſatisfaction of the ſaid officer, ſhall firſt give bond with ſufficient ſureties, to the Treaſurer of the United States, that none of the natives of Africa, or any other foreign country or place, ſhall be taken on board the ſaid ſhip or veſſel, to be tranſported, or ſold as ſlaves, in any other foreign port or place whatever, within nine months thereafter.

Section IV. *And be it further enacted*, That if any citizen or citizens of the United States ſhall, contrary to the true intent and meaning of this act, take on board, receive or tranſport any ſuch perſons, as above deſcribed, in this act, for the purpoſe of ſelling them as ſlaves, as aforeſaid, he or they ſhall forfeit and pay, for each and every perſon,

ſo received on board, tranſported, or ſold as aforeſaid, the ſum of two hundred dollars, to be recovered in any court of the United States proper to try the ſame; the one moiety thereof, to the uſe of the United States, and the other moiety to the uſe of ſuch perſon or perſons, who ſhall ſue for and proſecute the ſame.

FREDERICK AUGUSTUS MUHLENBERG.
Speaker of the Houſe of Repreſentatives.
JOHN ADAMS, *Vice-Preſident of the United States, and Preſident of the Senate.*

APPROVED—March the twenty-ſecond, 1794.
G°: WASHINGTON, *Preſident of the United States.*

That the memorial, to the General Aſſembly of Connecticut, was preſented, accompanied with a memorial from the Abolition Society of that ſtate; whereupon, a bill was originated, and paſſed, in the Houſe of Repreſentatives, to aboliſh ſlavery in Connecticut; which bill was negatived by a ſmall majority in the legiſlative Council.

That the memorials, to the Aſſemblies of New Jerſey and Pennſylvania, were preſented, but not acted upon.

That the memorial, to the Delaware Aſſembly, was preſented late in the ſeſſion, but no order taken thereon.

That the memorials, to the Legiſlatures of New York, Maryland, and Virginia, by reaſon of accidents, were not preſented.

That no certain information is yet obtained, that the memorials were preſented to the Legiſlatures of North Carolina, South Carolina, or Georgia, although your committee have reaſon to believe they were preſented, as they were forwarded by a careful perſon.

The committee, appointed to prepare an addreſs, as propoſed in the firſt and fourth ſections of the report of the committee of arrangement, preſented one, which was read, and ordered to lie on the table.

The committee, to whom was referred the third ſection of the report of the committee of arrangement, made report, which was read, and ordered to lie on the table.

The following reſolutions were then adopted, *viz.*

Reſolved, That addreſſes be prepared and preſented to the Legiſlatures of thoſe ſtates, which have not paſſed laws for preventing the importation of ſlaves.

Samuel Coates preſented an eſſay of an addreſs on this ſubject, to the ſtate of Georgia, which with the above reſolution, was referred to William Dunlap, William Rawle and Joſeph Townſend.

Reſolved, That a memorial be tranſmitted to the Legiſlature of South Carolina, requeſting a continuance of the act for preventing the importation of ſlaves.

Jonathan Edwards preſented a draught of an addreſs on this ſubject, which, with the

reſolution, was referred to the above committee, who were authorized to embrace ſuch other objects, in the memorials, as they might judge proper.

Reſolved, That Theodore Foſter, William Rawle, and William Johnſon, be a committee to conſider, and report, whether any, and what, amendments, appear neceſſary in the act, paſſed by the Congreſs of the United States, prohibiting the carrying on the ſlave-trade to any foreign place or country.

Reſolved, That it be recommended to the ſeveral Societies, to tranſmit, to the next Convention, an account of the number of free Negroes in their reſpective ſtates, with a general ſtatement of their property, employments, and moral conduct.

The addreſs, to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, was re-committed to William Walton Woolſey, William Johnſon, Samuel Coates, and Robert Patterſon, for the purpoſe of incorporating therein ſuch other matters as this Convention have reſolved to recommend to the ſaid Societies.

Adjourned till to-morrow evening at ſix o'clock.

January 13th. 1795.

The Convention met.

Preſent—Uriah Tracy, Zephaniah Swift, Theodore Foſter, William Johnſon, Lawrence Embree, William Dunlap, William Walton

Woolſey, James Sloan, William Rawle, Robert Patterſon, Samuel Coates, Caſpar Wiſtar, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Caleb Boyer, Cyrus Newlin, Joſeph Warner, Joſeph Townſend, Joſeph Thornburgh, John Bankſon, Philip Moore, Edward Scott, and James Houſton.

The Preſident being abſent, Theodore Foſter was appointed to preſide for the evening.

The committee, appointed to prepare memorials to the Legiſlatures of the ſtates of Georgia and South Carolina, preſented two eſſays, which were read; the one to the Legiſlature of Georgia, was ordered to lie on the table; that to the Legiſlature of South Carolina, after amendment, was agreed to as follows, *viz.*

To the *of the State of South Carolina.*

The memorial and petition of the Delegates from the ſeveral Societies, formed in different parts of the United States, for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, in Convention aſſembled, in Philadelphia, on the ſeventh day of January, 1795.

Reſpectfully ſhew,

THAT, having been deputed, and having convened, for the purpoſe of conſidering, and carrying into effect, the moſt

proper meaſures for the abolition of ſlavery; and being forcibly impreſſed with a ſenſe of the dangers to which the citizens of the United States are expoſed, while a numerous claſs of men exiſt among them, deprived of their natural rights, and forcibly held in bondage;—we think it our duty to addreſs you, as men, fellow citizens, and brethren, and earneſtly to requeſt your attention to the means of avoiding the evils naturally reſulting from the above mentioned unhappy circumſtances.

The firſt ſtep which we take the liberty of ſuggeſting to you, is an entire prohibition of all traffic in ſlaves, between your ſtate and every other nation or ſtate, either by importation or exportation. This is the firſt and principal object of our memorial—an object which we the more earneſtly recommend to your attention, as we are informed that the law of your ſtate, prohibiting the importation of ſlaves, will expire ſometime in March next.

In conſidering this ſubject, many methods of conciliating the affections of this unfortunate people, and preparing them for that ſtate in ſociety upon which depends our political happineſs, ſuggeſt themſelves:—ſuch as, an amelioration of their condition and a diffuſion of knowledge among them. But, as nothing can be effectual while the number of ſlaves may be daily increaſed by importa-

tion, and while the minds of our citizens are debaſed, and their hearts hardened, by contemplating theſe people only through the medium of avarice or prejudice (a neceſſary conſequence of the traffic in man) we conſine the prayer of this petition to the total prohibition of all traffic in ſlaves, between your ſtate and every other nation or ſtate, either by importation or exportation; which we reſpectfully ſolicit you to grant, having full confidence, that, independant of other conſiderations, you will ſee the evident policy of the meaſure.

The committee, appointed to conſider whether any, and what, amendments appear neceſſary in the act, paſſed by Congreſs, prohibiting the carrying on the ſlave-trade to any foreign place or country, made report as follows, *viz.*

The committee, to whom was referred the conſideration of the act of the Congreſs of the United States, for prohibiting the traffic in ſlaves, report,—

That, in their opinion, no amendment is neceſſary to the law in queſtion. It appears, to them, to prohibit the exportation of ſlaves from America, for the purpoſes of traffic, or from any part of any foreign country, whether a port, river, bay, or coaſt, to any other foreign country. The generical term "place" certainly includes as well the ſea as

the land; and it is, in ſubſtance, declared to be unlawful ſo to traffic in any place or manner, except only what the conſtitution, at preſent, denies the power of reſtraining, *viz.* the importation of ſlaves into the United States.

Whether further experience may point out defects at preſent not ſeen, the committee cannot predict. It may not, perhaps, be prudent to aid avarice and inhumanity by the attempt.

Ordered, That the ſaid report be accepted.

On motion,

Reſolved, That this Convention addreſs the free black people, in the United States, exhorting them, by ſuitable arguments and motives, to ſuch conduct and behaviour as may be judged moſt proper to promote their own happineſs, and render them uſeful members of ſociety.

Ordered, That Samuel Coates, Robert Patterſon, and William Dunlap, be a committee to prepare, and report, an addreſs conformable to the ſaid reſolution.

Adjourned till to-morrow evening at ſix o'clock.

January 14th. 1795.

The Convention met.

Preſent—Uriah Tracy, Zephaniah Swift, Theodore Foſter, William Johnſon, Lawrence Embree, William Walton Woolſey, James

Sloan, Robert Patterſon, Benjamin Ruſh, Samuel Coates, Caſpar Wiſtar, James Todd, Benjamin Say, Cyrus Newlin, Joſeph Warner, Joſeph Townſend, and James Houſton.

The addreſs, to the Legiſlature of the ſtate of Georgia, was read a ſecond time, and, being amended, was adopted as follows, *viz.*

To the *of the*

State of Georgia.

The memorial and petition of the Delegates from the ſeveral Societies, formed in different parts of the United States, for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, in Convention aſſembled, in Philadelphia, on the ſeventh day of January, 1795.

Reſpectfully ſhew,

THAT the Convention, aſſembled in the month of January, 1794, addreſſed your body on the ſubject of the African ſlave-trade; and the preſent Convention, not having been informed of the ſucceſs of that memorial, have thought it a duty incumbent on them, to re-call your attention to ſome points nearly connected with the honor of humanity, and the intereſt of your ſtate, and of the United States.

We have learned with the higheſt ſatisfaction, that you have prohibited the importation of ſlaves into your ſtate, from all

other parts of the world, except Africa. We congratulate you, and the friends of humanity in general, on ſuch a ſtep; but the time, we hope, is not far diſtant, when every motive of wiſdom and true policy will lead you to prohibit entirely this ſpecies of commerce. And we, at this time, requeſt your ſerious attention to a conſideration of the evil likely to enſue from the continuance of the traffic, and to the numerous advantages which muſt ariſe from its abolition. Among the leaſt of theſe, we would mention the conſiſtency it would afford to the American character, now held up, as an example to the European world; and the good treatment which might hence be naturally expected, as likely to be afforded to thoſe blacks who are already in your country. To theſe ſuggeſtions, permit us to add a wiſh, that you would conſider of the propriety of paſſing a law, to empower the owners of ſlaves to grant their gradual emancipation, by will or otherwiſe, as we are well convinced, that the happieſt effects are to be expected from a progreſſive abolition of ſlavery.

The committee, to whom was re-committed the addreſs to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, for the purpoſe of incorporating therein ſuch other matters as had received

the approbation of the Convention ſince the appointment of the firſt committee,—preſented one with the additions, which, being read and amended, was adopted as follows, *viz.*

To the Society for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, &c.

THE Delegates, from the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States, convened in this city, expreſs to you, with great ſatisfaction, the pleaſure they have experienced from the punctual attendance of the perſons delegated to this Convention, and that harmony with which they have deliberated on the ſeveral matters that have been preſented to them, at this time, for their conſideration. The benefits which may flow from a continuance of this general meeting, by aiding the principal deſign of its inſtitution—the univerſal emancipation of the wretched Africans who are yet in bondage, appear to us ſo many and important, that we are induced to recommend to you, to ſend Delegates to a ſimilar Convention, which we propoſe to be holden, in this city, on the firſt day of January, in the year one thouſand, ſeven hundred and ninety-ſix.

We have thought it proper to requeſt your further attention to that part of the addreſs, of the former Convention, which relates to the procurement of certified copies of the

laws of your ſtate reſpecting ſlavery; and that you would ſend, to the next Convention, exact copies of all ſuch laws as are now in force, and of ſuch as have been repealed. Convinced that an hiſtorical review of the various acts and proviſions of the Legiſlatures of the ſeveral ſtates, relating to ſlavery, from the periods of their reſpective ſettlements to the preſent time, by tracing the progreſs of the ſyſtem of African ſlavery in this country, and its ſucceſſive changes in the different governments of the Union, would throw much light on the objects of our enquiry and attention, and enable us to determine, how far the cauſe of juſtice and humanity has advanced among us, and how ſoon we may reaſonably expect to ſee it triumphant;—we recommend to you, to take ſuch meaſures as you may think moſt conducive to that purpoſe, for procuring materials for the work now propoſed, and aſſiſting its publication; and to communicate, to the enſuing Convention, what progreſs you ſhall have made toward perfecting the plan here offered for your conſideration and care.

Believing that an acquaintance with the names of the officers of the ſeveral Abolition Societies, would facilitate that friendly correſpondence which ought always to be preſerved between our various aſſociations, we requeſt that you would ſend, to the next,

and to every future, Convention, an accurate liſt of all the officers of your Society, for the time being, with the number of members of which it conſiſts. And it would aſſiſt that Convention in aſcertaining the exiſting ſtate of ſlavery in the United States, if you were to forward to them an exact account of the perſons who have been liberated by the agency of your Society, and of thoſe who may be conſidered as ſignal inſtances of the relief that you have afforded; and, alſo, a ſtatement of the number of free blacks in your ſtate, their property, employments, and moral conduct.

As a knowledge of what has been done, and of that ſucceſs which has attended the efforts of humanity, will cheriſh the hope of benevolence, and ſtimulate to further exertion, we truſt that you will be of opinion with us, that it would be highly uſeful to procure correct reports of all ſuch trials, and deciſions of courts of judicature, reſpecting ſlavery, a knowledge of which may be ſubſervient to the cauſe of abolition, and to tranſmit them to the next, or to any future, Convention.

It cannot have eſcaped your obſervation, how many perſons there are who continue the hateful practice of enſlaving their fellow men, and who acquieſce in the ſophiſtry of the advocates of that practice, merely from want of reflection, and from an habitual

attention to their own immediate intereſt. If to ſuch were often applied the force of reaſon, and the perſuaſion of eloquence, they might be awakened to a ſenſe of their injuſtice, and be ſtartled with horror at the enormity of their conduct. To produce ſo deſirable a change in ſentiment, as well as practice, we recommend to you the inſtituting of annual, or other periodical, diſcourſes, or orations, to be delivered in public, on the ſubject of ſlavery, and the means of its abolition.

We cannot forbear expreſſing to you our earneſt deſire, that you will continue, without ceaſing, to endeavour, by every method in your power which can promiſe any ſucceſs, to procure, either an abſolute repeal of all the laws in your ſtate, which countenance ſlavery, or ſuch an amelioration of them as will gradually produce an entire abolition. Yet, even ſhould that great end be happily attained, it cannot put a period to the neceſſity of further labor. The education of the emancipated, the nobleſt and moſt arduous taſk which we have to perform, will require all our wiſdom and virtue, and the conſtant exerciſe of the greateſt ſkill and diſcretion. When we have broken his chains, and reſtored the African to the enjoyment of his rights, the great work of juſtice and benevolence is not accompliſhed—The new born citizen muſt receive that inſtruction, and

thoſe powerful impreſſions of moral and religious truth, which will render him capable and deſirous of fulfilling the various duties he owes to himſelf and to his country. By educating ſome in the higher branches of ſcience, and all in the uſeful parts of learning, and in the precepts of religion and morality, we ſhall not only do away the reproach and calumny ſo unjuſtly laviſhed upon us, but confound the enemies of truth, by evincing that the unhappy ſons of Africa, in ſpite of the degrading influence of ſlavery, are in no wiſe inferior to the more fortunate inhabitants of Europe and America.

As a mean of effectuating, in ſome degree, a deſign ſo virtuous and laudable, we recommend to you to appoint a committee, annually, or for any other more convenient period, to execute ſuch plans, for the improvement of the condition and moral character of the free blacks in your ſtate, as you may think beſt adapted to your particular ſituation.

By a decree of the National Convention of France, all the blacks and people of color, within the territories of the French republic, are declared free, and entitled to an equal participation of the rights of citizens of France. We have been informed that many perſons, of the above deſcription, notwithſtanding the decree in their favor, have been brought from the Weſt-India iſlands, by emigrants, into the United States, and are

now held as ſlaves.—We ſuggeſt to you the propriety, as well as the neceſſity, of making enquiry into the ſubject, and of effecting their liberation, ſo far as may be found conſiſtent with the laws of your ſtate.

Copies of our proceedings will be tranſmitted to you, and we hope, that you will receive ſuch ſatisfaction as will induce your early attention to the objects we have here recommended.

The committee, appointed to prepare an addreſs to the free black people, reported one, which was read, and ordered to be poſtponed for the conſideration of the next Convention.

Reſolved, That Theodore Foſter, Robert Patterſon, Samuel Coates, and Benjamin Say, be a committee to ſuperintend the publication and diſtribution of the proceedings of this Convention; and that ſo many copies thereof as may be thought proper by the Pennſylvania Abolition Society, be printed, and diſtributed among the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States.

That the addreſs, to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, be ſigned by the Preſident, atteſted by the Secretary, and tranſmitted, by the above mentioned committee, to the ſaid Societies.

That the Memorials, to the Legiſlatures of the ſtates of South Carolina and Georgia, be

ſigned and atteſted as above mentioned, and tranſmitted to the reſpective Preſidents or Speakers of one branch of the Legiſlature, or laid before the reſpective Houſes, in ſuch manner as the Preſident may think expedient.

That a copy of the proceedings of this Convention be tranſmitted to the Preſident of the Abolition Society of London.

Reſolved, That the Abolition Society of Pennſylvania be requeſted to thank the Mayor of the city of Philadelphia for accommodating the Convention with a room.

The Convention then adjourned *ſine die.*

Publiſhed by order of the Convention,

WALTER FRANKLIN, *Secretary.*

Philadelphia, January 14th. 1795.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE THIRD

Convention of Delegates

FROM THE

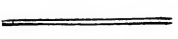
ABOLITION SOCIETIES

Eſtabliſhed in different Parts of the United States,

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE FIRST DAY OF JANUARY, ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-SIX, AND CONTINUED, BY ADJOURNMENTS, UNTIL THE SEVENTH DAY OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.



Philadelphia:

PRINTED BY ZACHARIAH POULSON, JUNIOR, NUMBER EIGHTY, CHESNUT-STREET.

1796.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE THIRD

Convention of Delegates.

AT a Convention of Deputies, from the Abolition Societies eſtabliſhed in the United States, aſſembled at Philadelphia, on the firſt day of January, 1796, in the City-hall, it appeared, by the credentials produced, that the following perſons were duly appointed to repreſent their reſpective Societies in this Convention, *viz.*

Theodore Foſter,	*Providence Society.*
John Murray, junior,	*New York Society.*
Elihu Hubbard Smith,	
William Johnſon,	
Thomas Eddy,	
William Dunlap,	
Samuel Miller,	
Moſes Rogers,	

Joſeph Bloomfield, Richard Hartshorne, Lucius H. Stockton, Thomas Redman, Eli Elmer,	*New Jerſey Society.*
William Rawle, Benjamin Ruſh, William Rogers, Samuel Powel Griffitts, James Todd, Samuel Coates, Caſpar Wiſtar,	*Pennſylvania Society.*
Frederick Craig, William Poole,	*Wilmington Society.*
Adam Fonerdon, Joſeph Townſend, John M'Kim, Henry Wilkins, George S. Johonett,	*Maryland Society.*
Robert Evans, Micajah Davis,	*Virginia Society.*

Of whom the following appeared and took their ſeats, *viz.*

Theodore Foſter,	William Rogers,
Elihu H. Smith,	Samuel P. Griffitts,
Samuel Miller,	James Todd,
Moſes Rogers,	Samuel Coates,
Joſeph Bloomfield,	William Poole,
William Rawle,	Joſeph Townſend,
Benjamin Ruſh,	Micajah Davis.

Theodore Foſter was elected Preſident.

Thomas Pim Cope, a member of the Pennſylvania Abolition Society, was choſen Secretary, and Joſeph Fry, Door-keeper.

Communications from the ſeveral Abolition Societies, made in conſequence of the addreſs from the Convention of 1795, were preſented and read, and referred to a committee, conſiſting of Joſeph Bloomfield, Elihu Hubbard Smith, William Rogers, William Poole, Joſeph Townſend, Samuel Miller, and Micajah Davis, who were directed to report to the Convention the objects proper for its attention, and the order in which they ſhould be conſidered.

The addreſs to the free black People, poſtponed by the laſt, for the conſideration of the preſent Convention, was read and made the order of Monday next.

Adjourned.

January ſecond, 1796.

Preſent:

Theodore Foſter, Preſident,

John Murray, junior,	James Todd,
Elihu H. Smith,	Samuel Coates,
Thomas Eddy,	William Poole,
Samuel Miller,	Joſeph Townſend,
Moſes Rogers,	Micajah Davis,
Joſeph Bloomfield,	Benjamin Ruſh,
Eli Elmer,	Caſper Wiſtar,
Samuel P. Griffitts,	William Rogers.

An apology was made for the non-attendance of Richard Hartshorne in the Convention—he being detained by ſickneſs in his family.

The committee appointed to report to the Convention the objects proper for its attention, and the order in which they ſhould be conſidered, made report.

So much of the ſaid report as reſpects the addreſs to the Abolition Societies, and the memorials and addreſſes to the Legiſlatures of South Carolina and Georgia, was read by paragraph, amended and agreed to.

It was then

Reſolved, That it be referred to a committee of three to draft an addreſs to the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States,

conformably to the recommendation of the committee of arrangement: Caſpar Wiſtar, Samuel Powel Griffitts and Samuel Miller were appointed accordingly.

Samuel Coates and Thomas Eddy were appointed a committee to aſcertain what meaſures have been taken, in purſuance of the reſolutions of former Conventions, relative to the tranſmiſſion of memorials and addreſſes to the different ſtate Legiſlatures.

Adjourned.

January fourth, 1796.

Preſent:

Theodore Foſter, Preſident,

John Murray, junior,	James Todd,
Elihu H. Smith,	Samuel Coates,
Thomas Eddy,	William Poole,
Samuel Miller,	Joſeph Townſend,
Moſes Rogers,	Henry Wilkins,
Joſeph Bloomfield,	Micajah Davis,
Thomas Redman,	Caſpar Wiſtar,
William Rogers,	and
Samuel P. Griffitts,	Benjamin Ruſh.

The conſideration of the addreſs to the free Blacks was entered into—After ſome progreſs made therein, the further conſideration of it was poſtponed till to-morrow.

Adjourned.

January fifth, 1796.

Preſent:

Theodore Foſter, Preſident,

John Murray, junior,	William Poole,
Thomas Eddy,	Joſeph Townſend,
Samuel Miller,	Henry Wilkins,
Joſeph Bloomfield,	Micajah Davis,
Thomas Redman,	Samuel P. Griffitts,
William Rogers,	Elihu H. Smith,
James Todd,	Moſes Rogers,
Samuel Coates,	Benjamin Ruſh,
Frederick Craig,	Caſpar Wiſtar.

The committee on the memorials and addreſſes to the different ſtate Legiſlatures, made report, which was ordered to lie on the table.

The committee on the addreſs to the Abolition Societies in the United States, made report, which was ordered to lie on the table.

The Convention reſumed the conſideration of the addreſs to the free Blacks, which, after ſundry amendments, was re-committed to Benjamin Ruſh, Samuel Coates and John Murray, junior.

The report relative to the memorials and addreſſes was taken up, conſidered by paragraph, amended, and adopted as follows:

The committee appointed to make enquiry reſpecting the meaſures taken in purſuance of the ſeveral reſolutions of the former Conventions, for tranſmitting memorials and addreſſes to the different State Legiſlatures; report,

That no other proceedings than thoſe that were reported laſt year, have taken place on the memorial to the Aſſembly of the State of Connecticut.

That the memorial to the Aſſembly of Rhode-iſland was received by the Abolition Society of that State, who did not think it expedient to preſent it at the time they received it.

That the memorial to the Aſſembly of New York was received, but not preſented; and, ſince that time, the Abolition Society of New York have thought it moſt proper not to preſent it; as a memorial, at their recommendation, is now prepared to be ſigned by the citizens at large; the object of which is to procure an act for the gradual abolition of ſlavery in that State.

The memorial to the Aſſembly of New-Jerſey has been preſented, and a bill for the gradual abolition of ſlavery was brought in, which was loſt by one vote.

The memorial to the Aſſembly of Pennſylvania was preſented, but not acted upon. The Society was of opinion it was not neceſ-

ſary; the objects of the memorial being either already obtained, or involved in the general proceedings of the Society.

The memorial to the Aſſembly of Delaware does not appear to have been acted upon.

The memorial to the Aſſembly of Maryland was ſent by the Society of Baltimore at two different times, to be laid before the Houſe; thoſe perſons who undertook to preſent it were of opinion, it was not a proper time to deliver it in, and therefore returned it to the Society again.

The memorial to the Aſſembly of Virginia was not preſented—the Abolition Society in that State, judged it was beſt not to proceed with it, as they had prepared a memorial to their Aſſembly, which was ſigned by a conſiderable number of their moſt reſpectable citizens, and which contemplated the gradual abolition of ſlavery, by freeing all male children, hereafter born, at the age of twenty-one years, and females at the age of eighteen years. This memorial (which alſo embraced the amelioration of the condition of ſlaves) was read in their Houſe of Repreſentatives, where the further conſideration of it was negatived by the ſmall majority of two votes.

The memorial to the Aſſembly of North Carolina we have reaſon to believe was not preſented; but we learn that a law was paſſed

about the end of the year 1794, or the beginning of 1795, in that ſtate, to prevent the importation of ſlaves therein either by land or water.

The two memorials in 1794 and 1795, to the Aſſemblies of South Carolina and Georgia were duly forwarded; but, we are informed, were neither of them preſented, and we cannot yet aſcertain the paſſing of any late act in either of thoſe ſtates for the relief of ſlaves.

Adjourned.

January ſixth, 1796.

Preſent:

Theodore Foſter, Preſident,

John Murray, junior,	Samuel Coates,
Elihu H. Smith.	Frederick Craig,
Thomas Eddy,	William Poole,
Samuel Miller,	Joſeph Townſend,
Joſeph Bloomfield,	Henry Wilkins,
Thomas Redman,	Micajah Davis,
William Rogers,	and
James Todd,	Benjamin Ruſh.

The Convention were informed, that the abſence of William Rawle was owing to indiſpoſition.

The committee to whom was referred the addreſs to the free Blacks, made report, which was read and adopted, as follows, *viz.*

TO THE

Free Africans and other free People of color

IN THE

UNITED STATES.

THE Convention of Deputies from the Abolition Societies in the United States, aſſembled at Philadelphia, have undertaken to addreſs you upon ſubjects highly intereſting to your proſperity.

They wiſh to ſee you act worthily of the rank you have acquired as freemen, and thereby to do credit to yourſelves, and to juſtify the friends and advocates of your color in the eyes of the world.

As the reſult of our united reflections, we have concluded to call your attention to the following articles of Advice. We truſt, they are dictated by the pureſt regard for your welfare, for we view you as Friends and Brethren.

In the firſt place, We earneſtly recommend to you, a regular attention to the important duty of public worſhip; by which means you will evince gratitude to your CREATOR, and, at the ſame time, promote knowledge, union, friendſhip, and proper conduct amongſt yourſelves,

Secondly, We adviſe ſuch of you, as have not been taught reading, writing, and the firſt principles of arithmetic, to acquire them as early as poſſible. Carefully attend to the inſtruction of your children in the ſame ſimple and uſeful branches of education. Cauſe them, likewiſe, early and frequently to read the holy Scriptures. They contain, among other great diſcoveries, the precious record of the original equality of mankind, and of the obligations of univerſal juſtice and benevolence, which are derived from the relation of the human race to each other in a COMMON FATHER.

Thirdly, Teach your children uſeful trades, or to labor with their hands in cultivating the earth. Theſe employments are favorable to health and virtue. In the choice of maſters, who are to inſtruct them in the above branches of buſineſs, prefer thoſe who will work with them; by this means they will acquire habits of induſtry, and be better preſerved from vice, than if they worked alone, or under the eye of perſons leſs intereſted in their welfare. In forming contracts, for yourſelves or children, with maſters, it may be uſeful to conſult ſuch perſons as are capable of giving you the beſt advice, who are known to be your friends, in order to prevent advantages being taken of your ignorance of the laws and cuſtoms of our country.

Fourthly, Be diligent in your reſpective callings, and faithful in all the relations you bear in ſociety, whether as huſbands, wives, fathers, children or hired ſervants. Be juſt in all your dealings. Be ſimple in your dreſs and furniture, and frugal in your family expenſes. Thus you will act like Chriſtians as well as freemen, and, by theſe means, you will provide for the diſtreſſes and wants of ſickneſs and old age.

Fifthly, Refrain from the uſe of ſpirituous liquors. The experience of many thouſands of the citizens of the United States has proved, that theſe liquors are not neceſſary to leſſen the fatigue of labor, nor to obviate the extremes of heat or cold; much leſs are they neceſſary to add to the innocent pleaſures of ſociety.

Sixthly, Avoid frolicking, and amuſements which lead to expenſe and idleneſs; they beget habits of diſſipation and vice, and thus expoſe you to deſerved reproach amongſt your white neighbours.

Seventhly, We wiſh to impreſs upon your minds the moral and religious neceſſity of having your marriages legally performed; alſo to have exact regiſters preſerved of all the births and deaths which occur in your reſpective families.

Eighthly, Endeavour to lay up as much as poſſible of your earnings for the benefit of

your children, in caſe you ſhould die before they are able to maintain themſelves—your money will be ſafeſt and moſt beneficial when laid out in lots, houſes or ſmall farms.

Ninthly, We recommend to you, at all times and upon all occaſions, to behave yourſelves to all perſons in a civil and reſpectful manner, by which you may prevent contention and remove every juſt occaſion of complaint. We beſeech you to reflect, it is by your good conduct alone, that you can refute the objections which have been made againſt you as rational and moral creatures, and remove many of the difficulties, which have occurred in the general emancipation of ſuch of your brethren as are yet in bondage.

With hearts anxious for your welfare, we commend you to the guidance and protection of that BEING who is able to keep you from all evil, and who is the common Father and Friend of the whole family of mankind.

Reſolved, That the above addreſs be ſigned by the Preſident and atteſted by the Secretary, and that three thouſand copies thereof be printed in hand-bills, and tranſmitted to the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States; to be by them diſtributed in ſuch manner as ſhall appear beſt calculated to promote its deſign.

The addreſs to the Abolition Societies was conſidered by paragraphs, amended, and re-

committed to the committee who made the report.

The report of the committee of arrangement was proceeded on and finally adopted, as follows:

The committee appointed to arrange the objects proper for the consideration of the Convention, and the most suitable means of attaining the same, report,

That an address be made, by this convention, to the several Abolition Societies in the United States, recommending to them to send deputies to a convention similar to the present, to be holden at Philadelphia the first Wednesday of May, in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven.

Also, that it be recommended to those societies who have not sent to this Convention, complete copies of the laws of their several States relative to slavery, to send, to the next Convention, certified copies of all such laws as are now in force, have been repealed, or may be hereafter passed; and also correct lists of the officers of each society for the time being; enumeration of the members of each society; accounts of the relief extended to Africans and others unlawfully held in bondage; statements of their condition, whether bond or free, in respect to property, employment and moral conduct; reports of trials and decisions of courts relative to Africans; conformity to

the recommendation of the laſt Convention to eſtabliſh periodical diſcourſes; information reſpecting the ſucceſs of all endeavors after a repeal or amelioration of the laws concerning ſlavery; and the progreſs made in extending to the Africans the benefit of education; and finally, an unremitted attention to all the great objects pointed out in the addreſs, above referred to, of the laſt Convention: And to requeſt, that whatever communications are made to the Convention from the ſeveral Societies, in conſequence of this recommendation, may be preſented in the form of regular written reports from each Society; noticing in what form and degree they have carried them into effect, and how far their efforts have been ineffectual—thus exhibiting a view of the ſtate of each Society; ſo that the ſeveral reports may be entered on the minutes of the Convention, and the Convention be thereby the better enabled to decide on the propriety of making ſuch communications public; or what part or parts of them are beſt adapted, by their publication, to advance the cauſe of truth and humanity.

And as advantages have, in numerous inſtances, reſulted from accurate regiſters being kept, by perſons appointed for that purpoſe by certain of the Abolition Societies, of manumiſſions, to recommend to all thoſe of the Abolition Societies who have not already entered into ſuch a regulation, to make it hereafter a matter of diligent attention.

And further, as difficulties have arifen in refpect to carrying into effect that part of the laft circular addrefs of the Convention which relates to people of color, emigrants from the Weft Indies, now refiding in the United States, that the propofed addrefs contain an extract from the twelfth article of the Conſular Convention between France and the United States, which deſignates the proper tribunals to whom application, in all ſuch caſes, is to be made; and as preciſe information, on this ſubject, cannot be too generally diffuſed, that the Pennſylvania Society be requeſted to collect all poſſible information relative to ſuch emigrants of color, in this country, as are made citizens of the French republic, by the decree of the National Convention of the ſixteenth Pluvioſe of the ſecond year of the republic, and to tranſmit the ſame to the ſeveral Societies.

And that it be impreſſed upon all the Societies, to uſe every juſt means in their power which may advance, either directly or indirectly, the great cauſe of liberty; and that, as one mean of promoting its intereſts, they be earneſtly ſolicited to diſplay a marked preference of all ſuch commodities as are of the culture or manufacture of freemen, to thoſe which are cultivated or manufactured by ſlaves.

That inquiry be made concerning the meaſures taken, in purſuance of the reſolution

of the Convention of 1795, for tranſmitting memorials to the Legiſlatures of the States of South Carolina and Georgia.

In addition to the preceding report, the committee have thought proper to lay before the Convention, a ſummary of the information which has been forwarded by the ſeveral Societies, in conformity to the recommendation of former Conventions, which is as follows, *viz.*

The *Connecticut Society* have tranſmitted the conſtitution of their Society, and copies of the ſtatutes of Connecticut concerning ſlavery and the ſlave trade.

The *New-York Society* have tranſmitted copies of their conſtitution, of the exiſting laws of their State relative to ſlaves and ſlavery; a correct liſt of their officers for the time being, and a ſtatement of the number of their members; a brief account of the origin and progreſs of the Society, together with a general eſtimate of the relief extended to Africans and the deſcendants of Africans; a ſhort hiſtory of their inſtitution for the education of African deſcendants; and the additional information, that they have inſtituted an annual oration on ſubjects relative to the object of their aſſociation; that they are preparing, to be tranſmitted to ſome future Convention, reports of ſeveral caſes adjudged in the courts of judicature of the State of New-York; that a plan has been pro-

poſed (in conformity to the recommendation of the laſt Convention) for educating a certain number of black children, liberally; and that they have now in readineſs, to be preſented to the Legiſlature of that State at their next ſeſſion, a petition for the gradual abolition of ſlavery in that State; of the ſucceſs of which they indulge the moſt flattering expectations.

The *New-Jerſey Society* have tranſmitted the conſtitution of their Society, the laws of New-Jerſey concerning negroe and mulatto ſlaves now in force, and ſuch as have been repealed, and a certified copy of the deciſions of the Supreme Court of New-Jerſey reſpecting ſlavery; a liſt of the officers of the Society, with the number of members of which it conſiſts and the minutes of the Society for the year 1795.

The *Pennſylvania Society* have tranſmitted the conſtitution of their Society and the act of the incorporation of the ſame; copies of ſuch laws reſpecting ſlavery as are now in force, with extracts and titles of the laws which have been repealed; a liſt of the officers and number of the members, cloſing with the year 1795; a plan for improving the condition of the free blacks; caſes of the liberation of two French negroes under the decree of the ſixteenth of PJuvioſe, ſecond year of the republic; ſpecimens of penmanſhip of the black children in one of the ſchools of Philadelphia; an account of the number

of free blacks in the city and liberties of Philadelphia, whereby it appears, that there are three hundred and eighty-one families, conſiſting of one thouſand two hundred and ninety-four perſons of that deſcription, included in which number are the proprietors of ninety-nine houſes, the average worth of which houſes are ſuppoſed to be two hundred dollars each, held chiefly on ground-rent, and, for that cauſe, valued low—the greater number of theſe free blacks conduct themſelves with reputation and enjoy the comforts ariſing from induſtry. In addition to the above-deſcribed black people, there are many others who are employed as domeſtic ſervants in the families of the whites, whoſe numbers are not aſcertained. The blacks have two places of worſhip of their own in the city of Philadelphia, and there are alſo ſeveral free ſchools for their particular uſe—ſome of which are ſupported by the Pennſylvania Abolition Society.

The *Wilmington Society* have tranſmitted the conſtitution of their Society; a liſt of perſons liberated by their agency; a liſt of their officers with the number of members; and information, that the Society propoſe to petition the Legiſlature of Delaware, at their next ſeſſion, for an act for the gradual abolition of ſlavery.

The *Maryland Society* have tranſmitted the conſtitution of their Society; liſt of officers and number of members; number of perſons

liberated through their agency; information that the Society propoſe to make application to the Legiſlature for the amelioration of the ſituation of the blacks, and for a gradual abolition of ſlavery; that annual orations have been delivered; good diſpoſition of the blacks diſcovered to attend places of religious worſhip; and the inſtitution of an academy for their inſtruction in literature, under the particular patronage of the Society.

The *Virginia Society* have tranſmitted the conſtitution of their Society; liſt of officers and number of members, with information, that an application to the Legiſlature of Virginia, for the gradual abolition of ſlavery, has been rejected by a very ſmall majority.

Adjourned.

January ſeventh, 1796.

Preſent:

Theodore Foſter, Preſident,

John Murray, junior,
Elihu H. Smith,
Thomas Eddy,
Samuel Miller,
Moſes Rogers,
Joſeph Bloomfield,
Thomas Redman,
William Rogers,
Samuel P. Griffitts,
James Todd,
Samuel Coates,
Frederick Craig,
William Poole,
Joſeph Townſend,
Henry Wilkins,
Micajah Davis,
and
Benjamin Ruſh.

The committee to whom was referred the addreſs to the different Abolition Societies made report, which was adopted as follows, *viz.*

To the Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

The Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States inform you, that, agreeably to the recommendation of the Convention of laſt year, they met in this city on the firſt inſtant, and have, with much harmony and ſatisfaction, gone through the buſineſs which came before them. They have the pleaſure to aſſure you, that every ſucceſſive meeting evinces the importance of that union and concert which are ſo happily eſtabliſhed among the ſeveral Societies, in purſuing the great object of their aſſociation.

But, although the exertions of this delegated Body have been hitherto attended, as we hope, with conſiderable ſucceſs—Although we are perſuaded that no ſmall progreſs may be marked in the great buſineſs of emancipation; yet much remains to be done; as long as *ſeven hundred thouſand* of our Fellow Creatures, in the United States, continue in a ſtate of bondage, there appears a preſſing neceſſity for the continuance of our efforts; that we ſhould keep our attention fixed upon the ſubject, and ſtand ready to improve every favorable opportunity that

may occur, to forward the intereſting cauſe in which we are engaged. We are therefore induced to continue the recommendation heretofore made, that a ſimilar meeting be annually held; and as convening at the preſent ſeaſon is attended with inconveniences, we propoſe, that the next Convention, ſhould aſſemble in this city, on the firſt Wedneſday of May, in the year 1797.

It gave us pleaſure to learn, from various reports which were laid before us, that moſt of the recommendations made by the former Conventions, had received a conſiderable degree of attention, from the ſeveral ſocieties to whom they were addreſſed. But, as they have not been uniformly and perfectly complied with, permit us to repeat the requeſt, *ſo far as the ſame may be applicable to your ſociety*, that you tranſmit to the next Convention, certified copies of all ſuch laws, in any wiſe reſpecting ſlavery, as are now in force, as have been repealed, or may hereafter be enacted—Correct liſts of the officers of your ſociety, for the time being, and alſo the names of all your members, and their places of abode—An account of the proceedings of your ſociety, in relieving Africans and others unlawfully held in bondage—A ſtatement of the condition of the blacks, both bond and free, in your ſtate, with reſpect to the property of the free, and the employment and moral conduct of all—Re-

ports of ſuch trials and deciſions of the Courts of Judicature, relative to Africans, as may have taken place—An account of the endeavors which have been uſed to obtain a repeal or amelioration of the laws reſpecting ſlavery —Information concerning what has been done, in purſuance of the recommendation of the laſt Convention, to eſtabliſh periodical diſcourſes on the ſubject of ſlavery, and the means of its abolition—And finally, a report of the progreſs you have made in extending to Africans the benefits of education. And we further requeſt, that whatever communications may be made to the next, or to any future Convention, in conſequence of the above recommendations, be preſented in the form of regular written reports, noticing in what manner and degree you have carried them into effect, and how far your efforts have been ineffectual. By this mean there will be exhibited ſuch a view of the ſtate of each Society, as that the ſeveral reports may be entered on the minutes of the Convention, who will thereby be better enabled to decide on the propriety of making public ſuch parts of theſe communications as may be beſt adapted to advance the cauſe of truth and humanity.

And as very important advantages have, in ſeveral inſtances, reſulted from accurate regiſters being kept, by perſons appointed for that purpoſe by certain of the Abolition So-

cieties in the United States, of such manumissions as have taken place; we do earnestly recommend, should you not already have entered into this regulation, that you make it hereafter an object of diligent attention. Such records may, in various ways, subserve the cause of emancipation.

We learn, that the proposal made by the last Convention, respecting the blacks and people of color, who have emigrated from the West Indies, and now reside in the United States, has, in many instances, given rise to difficulty; in order to remove which, we have been induced to transmit to you the following extract from the twelfth article of the Consular Convention between France and the United States; which, by designating the proper tribunals to whom application, in such cases, is to be made, will, we trust, be found sufficient, in future, to direct your proceedings in this business, *viz.*

" That all differences and suits between " French citizens in the United States, and " between American citizens in the dominions of France, shall be determined by " the respective Consuls and Vice Consuls, " either by a reference to arbitrators, or by " a summary judgment, and without costs; " and that no officer of the country, civil " or military, shall interfere therein, or take " any part whatever in the matter."

When we contemplate the odious nature and the immenſe magnitude of the evil which you have aſſociated to oppoſe, and the ineſtimable importance of the objects which you are ſeeking to obtain, we cannot forbear to urge unremitted exertions, in purſuing the great ends before you. We are perſuaded you will not neglect any juſt means in your power, which may tend to advance, either directly, or indirectly, the cauſe of equal liberty;—And it gives us pleaſure alſo to expreſs our perſuaſion, that, in this purſuit, much is ſtill in your power. Although you cannot controul Legiſlatures; and though, when you plead the cauſe of humanity, they will not, at all times, liſten to you; yet there are other means to be uſed, perhaps, more effectual—You can do much, by directing your efforts to the conviction of individuals—by diffuſing proper publications amongſt them, and by preſenting the evils of ſlavery in various forms to their minds.

* *The following was inſerted in the Addreſs to the Pennſylvania Abolition Society:*

And as preciſe information, on this ſubject, cannot be too generally diffuſed, we requeſt you to collect all poſſible intelligence relative to ſuch blacks and people of color in the United States as are made Citizens of the French Republic, by the decree of the National Convention, of the ſixteenth Pluvioſe, ſecond year of the republic, and tranſmit the ſame to all the other Abolition Societies in the United States.

Nor can we ſuppoſe, it would be an effort altogether ineffectual in favor of liberty, were its friends, throughout the United States, in all caſes where it is practicable, to diſplay a marked preference of ſuch commodities, as are of the culture or manufacture of freemen, to thoſe which are cultivated or manufactured by ſlaves—In this way, every individual may diſcountenance oppreſſion, and bear teſtimony againſt a practice, which is ſtill ſuffered to remain the diſgrace of our land.

We have thought proper to addreſs the free Africans and other free people of color in the United States, on various ſubjects, which we believe nearly to concern their intereſt and happineſs. We have directed copies of this addreſs to be tranſmitted to you, and requeſt you to diſtribute the ſame, in your State, in ſuch manner as you may judge beſt calculated to promote its deſign.

We cannot conclude, without calling your attention, in a particular manner, to the neceſſity of appointing ſuch of your members to repreſent you in the Convention, as will be punctually attentive to the duties of their appointment. We are ſorry to obſerve, that there is ſome ground of complaint on this ſubject; but we truſt, that, in future, ſuch a full repreſentation will appear, as will give encreaſing encouragement, energy and ſucceſs to our united endeavors, in the great cauſe of human happineſs.

Copies of our proceedings will be laid before you; from which, we hope, you will derive ſatisfaction, and perceive the importance of the ſeveral objects which we have recommended to your attention.

The Delegates from the Pennſylvania Society, communicated the following extract of a letter to that Society, from Samuel Hoare, junior, Treaſurer to the committee of the London Society, inſtituted for the purpoſe of effecting the abolition of the ſlave trade:

" Since the commencement of our correſ-
" pondence, we have never addreſſed you
" under circumſtances of greater diſcourage-
" ment, as to the attainment of the object
" of our inſtitution, than at preſent—The
" arts and ſophiſtry of intereſted men, have
" even proved ſufficient to induce the Houſe
" of Commons to deſert a duty, the incum-
" bency of which, after a long inveſtigation,
" it had ſolemnly acknowledged—And we
" have to lament the failure of thoſe exer-
" tions, which, aiming at a temporary abo-
" lition of the ſlave trade, were calculated
" to avert the calamities we had anticipated
" as the inevitable conſequences of its con-
" tinuance.

" At our laſt meeting, your letter of the
" third of March, was laid before us, and
" afforded a ſatisfaction which ſuch proofs of

" your benevolent perſeverance have never
" failed to impart—We beg you will be aſ-
" ſured of the intereſt we continue to feel
" in the ſucceſs of your endeavors, and of
" the pleaſure with which we conſider their
" increaſing impreſſion on the minds of your
" Fellow Citizens—The eſtabliſhment of
" ſimilar Societies in other and remote parts,
" and of a Convention intended to concen-
" trate your influence, we regard as happy
" preſages that the day is not far diſtant,
" when the virtue and vigour of your riſing
" Empire, will be manifeſted in the total
" extinction of perſonal as well as political
" ſlavery, in the United States.

" We duly received the copies ſent to us
" of the minutes of the laſt Convention; and
" we deſire, through you, to preſent our
" thanks for this acceptable mark of its atten-
" tion, with a copy of our late report."

Which, with the printed report of the committee therein referred to, was now read.

Whereupon,

Reſolved, That this Convention, whilſt they regret the want of ſucceſs which has attended the efforts of the friends of the abolition of ſlavery in Great Britain, receive with ſatisfaction the congratulations of the London committee, on the progreſs made towards the extinction of ſlavery in the United States; and that the Preſident tranſmit a copy of the pro-

ceedings of the Convention, to the committee of the London Society, with a letter expreſſive of the feelings of the Convention on this occaſion.

Reſolved, That Theodore Foſter, Samuel Coates and Samuel Powel Griffitts be a committee to ſuperintend the publication and diſtribution of the proceedings of the Convention; and that fifteen hundred copies be printed and diſtributed amongſt the different Abolition Societies in the United States.

Reſolved, That the addreſs to the ſeveral Societies be ſigned by the Preſident, atteſted by the Secretary, and forwarded to the Societies by the committee above mentioned: and that the ſame committee be further directed to tranſmit to the ſeveral Societies, the printed copies of the addreſs to the free blacks, in ſuch proportion as ſhall to them appear proper.

Reſolved, That James Todd, Samuel Powel Griffitts and Samuel Coates be a committee to notify all the Abolition Societies in the United States, of the meeting of the next Convention, at leaſt three months before ſuch meeting is convened: and to have the proceedings of this and the former Conventions tranſcribed, and, with the papers, depoſited in the care of the Preſident of the Pennſylvania Society.

Reſolved, That William Rogers and James Todd be a committee to communicate to the Mayor and Corporation of the City of Philadelphia, the thanks of this Convention, for the uſe of their room.

Adjourned, *ſine die.*

Publiſhed by order of the Convention,

THOMAS P. COPE, *Secretary.*

Philadelphia, January 7th. 1796.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE FOURTH

Convention of Delegates

FROM THE

ABOLITION SOCIETIES

Eſtabliſhed in different Parts of the United States,

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE THIRD DAY OF MAY, ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-SEVEN, AND CONTINUED, BY ADJOURNMENTS, UNTIL THE NINTH DAY OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.

Philadelphia:

PRINTED BY ZACHARIAH POULSON, JUNIOR,
NUMBER EIGHTY, CHESNUT-STREET

1797.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE FOURTH

Convention of Delegates.

May third, 1797.

REPRESENTATIVES from several of the Abolition Societies established in various parts of the United States, having assembled in the Senate Chamber at Philadelphia, on the third of May, 1797; it appeared, by credentials produced, that the following persons were appointed Delegates to this Convention:

Willett Seaman,
Thomas Eddy,
Samuel L. Mitchill,
William Dunlap,
Elihu Hubbard Smith,
} *From New-York.*

Joſeph Bloomfield,
Richard Hartshorne,
Joſeph Sloan,
William Cox, junior,
William Carpenter, } *From New-Jerſey.*

Benjamin Ruſh,
William Rawle,
Samuel Powel Griffitts,
Caſpar Wiſtar,
Samuel Coates,
Robert Patterſon,
James Todd, } *From Pennſylvania.*

Seth Hill Evitts, - - *From Choptank.*

Francis Johonnett,
Jeſſe Tyſon,
Gerrard T. Hopkins, } *From Baltimore.*

Joſeph Anthony, - - *From Richmond.*

George Drinker, - - *From Alexandria.*

Of whom the following attended and took their ſeats:

William Dunlap,	James Todd,
Elihu H. Smith,	Seth Hill Evitts,
Joſeph Bloomfield,	Jeſſe Tyſon,
Richard Hartshorne,	Francis Johonnett,
Joſeph Sloan,	Gerrard T. Hopkins,
Benjamin Ruſh,	Joſeph Anthony,
Samuel P. Griffitts,	George Drinker,
William Cox, junior,	and
Samuel Coates,	Robert Patterſon.

Joſeph Bloomfield was elected Preſident.

Thomas P. Cope was appointed Secretary, and Jacob Meyer, Door-keeper.

Communications from New-York, Pennſylvania, Choptank, Maryland and Alexandria Abolition Societies were preſented and read.

Adjourned till ten o'clock A. M. to-morrow.

May fourth, 1797.

Preſent:

Joſeph Bloomfield, Preſident,

William Dunlap,	Seth Hill Evitts,
Elihu H. Smith,	Francis Johonnett,
Richard Hartshorne,	Jeſſe Tyſon,
Joſeph Sloan,	Gerrard T. Hopkins,
William Cox, junior,	George Drinker,
Samuel P. Griffitts,	Joſeph Anthony,
Samuel Coates,	James Todd,
Caſpar Wiſtar,	Robert Patterſon.

Communications from the New-Jerſey and Virginia ſocieties were produced and read.

It was, on motion,

Reſolved, That Elihu H. Smith, Richard Hartshorne, Robert Patterſon, Seth Hill Evitts, Francis Johonnett, George Drinker and Joſeph Anthony be a committee to take into conſideration the reports from the different Abolition Societies, and to report to the Convention the meaſures neceſſary to be taken

in conſequence of thoſe communications, as well as the objects proper for the attention of the Convention.

Samuel P. Griffitts ſtated, that the members appointed by the laſt Convention to notify the Abolition Societies of the meeting of this Convention, to have the proceedings of the former Conventions tranſcribed, and, with the papers, depoſited in the care of the Preſident of the Pennſylvania Society, had fully performed the ſervice aſſigned them.

Adjourned till three o'clock P. M. to-morrow.

May fifth, 1797.

Preſent:

Joſeph Bloomfield, Preſident,

Elihu H. Smith,	Francis Johonnett,
Richard Hartshorne,	Samuel Coates,
Joſeph Sloan,	James Todd,
William Cox, junior,	Seth H. Evitts,
Benjamin Ruſh,	Jeſſe Tyſon,
Samuel P. Griffitts,	Robert Patterſon,
Caſpar Wiſtar,	Gerrard T. Hopkins,
William Dunlap,	George Drinker,
Samuel L. Mitchill,	Joſeph Anthony.

The committee appointed at the laſt meeting to take into conſideration the reports from the different Abolition Societies, and to report to the Convention the meaſures neceſſary to

be taken in consequence of those communications, as well as the objects proper for the attention of the Convention, made the following report, which was read and considered by paragraphs.

The committee to whom were referred the several communications made to the Convention, and who were directed to consider what objects are proper for the attention of the Convention, and the most suitable means for their attainment, report,

I. That they have carefully attended to the communications, from the several Societies, made to the Convention for the past and present years, and compared them with the recommendations and requisitions of the Convention of 1796. By the annexed table, the Convention will perceive what these requisitions and recommendations were, and how far each society has complied therewith.

II. The committee recommend it to the Convention, to address a letter or memorial to the Secretary of State of the United States, recapitulating the evidence which the records of the District Court of the United States, for the Pennsylvania District afford, of attempts made by citizens of the United States, to evade the law prohibiting our citizens from supplying foreign countries with slaves, by clandestinely using the Danish flag and registers, and praying such aid and interference of the government of the United States, with the court of Denmark, or with other governments

under whoſe authority ſuch practices now obtain, as may conſiſt with propriety, for the prevention of the uſe of their flag or regiſters, by the citizens of the United States, under any pretence whatever, for the purpoſe of purſuing the trade in men.

III. It appearing from the report of the Alexandria Society, that the law of the United States, entitled, "An act to prohibit the carrying on the ſlave-trade from the United States to any foreign place or country," is defective, in that it does not prevent the ſhipment of ſlaves (for ſale in the Weſt Indies and elſewhere) on board veſſels, not ſpecially fitted out for that purpoſe—the act being thereby evaded.

The committee recommend it to the Convention, to preſent a memorial or petition to Congreſs, praying ſuch an amendment of the act above referred to, as may oblige the maſter or owner of any veſſel or veſſels before clearing out, to declare on oath or affirmation, that no ſlaves are received or taken on board ſaid veſſel or veſſels, for ſale in any foreign port; and as may further oblige him to enter into a recognizance or bond, with a ſufficient penalty to be put in ſuit, and the penalty recovered, in caſe a ſale of any ſlave ſo put on board ſhould take place.

IV. It appears from the papers from North Carolina, that, by a law of that ſtate, paſſed in 1777, certain negroes and others, who had been previouſly emancipated by their pro-

prietors, citizens of that ſtate, were taken up, and again reduced to ſlavery; and this, not only where the perſons ſo emancipated had continued in the ſtate, but alſo where the emancipation had been effected in other ſtates, and the freed-man had returned into North Carolina, to reſide there: in both caſes, in direct violation of the conſtitution of the ſtate. But the committee would recommend it to the Convention to obtain the opinion of the moſt eminent counſel in this city, whether an action for damages, by a perſon emancipated in another ſtate before the paſſing of the act in 1777, and who was again reduced to ſlavery on returning to North Carolina, could not be maintained againſt the purchaſer or holder of ſuch perſon in the Courts of the United States; or whether any, and what legal remedy may be had for perſons under theſe circumſtances, and where they were made ſlaves, without having quitted the ſtate.

V. The committee are further of opinion, that much advantage would reſult from annexing ſhort and comprehenſive abſtracts of the laws now in force in the ſeveral ſtates, relative to Africans and other people of color, (ſo far as may be practicable at this time) to the printed minutes of this Convention, for the information of the ſeveral Societies, and recommend it accordingly.

VI. The benefits which ſeem to have reſulted from the addreſs made to the free blacks in the United States by the Convention of

1796, in the judgment of the committee, indicate the propriety of a similar address the present year, reiterating the most important articles of advice contained in the former, and acquainting them with the general good effects which it has produced.

VII. The great object of the several Conventions in collecting the various information which they have solicited from the Societies, being to obtain materials for the composition, at some future time of a general history of slavery in the United States, it seems necessary to use means for procuring the proper documents from those states wherein no Abolition Societies now exist; it is the opinion of the committee, that the Convention should, therefore, procure the assistance of suitable persons in those states wherein no Societies for promoting the abolition of slavery are instituted, by whose means authentic copies of all laws passed therein since the settlement of the country may be obtained.

VIII. The committee recommend it to the Convention, to send letters to the Societies in London and Paris, communicating general information concerning the progress of emancipation in the United States since the last Convention; and accompanied by copies of the printed minutes of this Convention. The committee also suggest the propriety of writing to the Governor and Council at Sierra Leone, requesting such minute and legal evidence as they can afford, which may in any

wiſe tend to diſcover and bring to condemnation thoſe citizens of the United States, who, contrary to the laws of their country, purſue the traffic in ſlaves.

IX. Laſtly—Your committee deem it proper and neceſſary, that a circular addreſs be ſent to the ſeveral Societies within the United States, requeſting them, generally, to ſend Delegates to a Convention to be held in the city of Philadelphia on the firſt Wedneſday of June, 1798, and particularly inculcating this meaſure on thoſe Societies who are unrepreſented in the preſent Convention:—that this addreſs enjoin upon the Societies, a continued attention to the ſeveral requiſitions of former Conventions as far as may apply to each, and referring them for information to the table accompanying this report, which the committee think proper to be annexed to the printed minutes of this Convention: that the ſpecial attention of ſuch Societies as have hitherto either partially or not at all acted in this matter, be called by the addreſs to the inſtruction of the people of color within their limits:—and that it ſolicit every kind of information from the Societies, which may, in any wiſe, illuſtrate the hiſtory of ſlavery in the United States; finally, that it recommend to Societies exiſting in the ſame ſtate, that they form a general plan of union or confederation, ſo as on all important occaſions, to act in concert.

The firſt ſection having been agreed to and the ſecond poſtponed, it was, on motion,

Reſolved, That the third be referred to a committee, conſiſting of James Todd and George Drinker, who are authorized to take the opinion of legal counſel on the ſubject, and if ſuch counſel prove favorable to the purpoſe of the recommendation therein contained, to prepare and report a memorial accordingly—The fourth ſection was alſo referred to the ſame committee.

The fifth ſection was committed to William Dunlap, Joſeph Sloan, Robert Patterſon and Jeſſe Tyſon, who are to collect and arrange the abſtracts therein mentioned.

Benjamin Ruſh and Samuel Coates were appointed a committee to prepare an addreſs agreeably to the recommendation contained in the ſixth ſection.

The following reſoluion was adopted reſpecting the ſeventh ſection, *viz.*

Reſolved, That it be recommended to the Pennſylvania Society, to carry into effect that part of the recommendation which relates to the ſtates ſouthward of New-York; and to the New-York Society, to carry into effect ſuch part as regards the ſtates to the northward of New-York.

The eighth ſection was referred to Samuel L. Mitchill, William Cox, junior, and Caſpar Wiſtar, who are to prepare drafts of addreſſes conformably thereto.

Samuel P. Griffitts, Caſpar Wiſtar, Richard Hartshorne and Joſeph Anthony were appointed a committee to report an addreſs as propoſed in the ninth ſection.

The ſecond ſection was then taken up, and Samuel P. Griffitts and Samuel Coates appointed a committee to report thereon.

Seth Hill Evitts, obtained leave of abſence on account of ſickneſs in his family.

The Convention adjourned till three o'clock on Monday afternoon.

May eighth, 1797.

Preſent:

Joſeph Bloomfield, Preſident,

Elihu H. Smith,	Samuel Coates,
William Dunlap,	Robert Patterſon,
Richard Hartshorne,	James Todd,
Joſeph Sloan,	Francis Johonnett,
Bejamin Ruſh,	Jeſſe Tyſon,
Samuel P. Griffitts,	Gerrard T. Hopkins,
Caſpar Wiſtar,	George Drinker,
Samuel L. Mitchill,	Joſeph Anthony.

The committee, on the third and fourth ſections of the report of the committee to whom were referred the ſeveral communications made to the Convention, made report which was read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The committee on the ſixth ſection, reported an addreſs to the free Africans and other free people of color in the United States, which was read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The committee on the eighth ſection reported eſſays of the letters directed to be written, which were read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The committee on the ſecond ſection made report, which was read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The committee on the ninth ſection made report, which was read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The committee on the fifth ſection reported a number of abſtracts of laws reſpecting ſlavery, which were

Ordered to lie on the table.

The report of the committee on the third and fourth ſections, was then taken up, and, with the opinion of counſel on the ſubject, read a ſecond time.

Whereupon,

Reſolved, That a committee of two be appointed to draft and report a letter to the Secretary of the treaſury of the United States, reciting the information which the Convention have received concerning the manner of evading the law of the United States prohibiting the ſupplying foreign nations with

ſlaves, and requeſting him to addreſs particular inſtructions to the ſeveral collectors ſo as to prevent ſuch evaſion. Elihu H. Smith and James Todd, were appointed a committee for carrying this reſolution into effect.

The addreſs to the free Africans and other free people of color in the United States, was called up and after conſideration re-committed.

The letter propoſed to be ſent to the committee of the London ſociety, inſtituted for the purpoſe of effecting the abolition of the ſlave trade, as reported by the committee on the eighth ſection, was then read; and after amendment agreed to, and the Secretary was requeſted to have a fair copy of it prepared for the ſignature of the Preſident.

The letter to the ſociety of the friends of the blacks at Paris, as reported by the ſame committee, was read, and after amendment re-committed.

The committee appointed to draft and report a letter to the Secretary of the treaſury, reported one, which was read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The Convention then entered into a conſideration of the addreſs to the Governor and Council of the Sierra Leone ſettlement, which was agreed to.

Adjourned till ten o'clock to-morrow morning.

May ninth, 1797.

Preſent:

Joſeph Bloomfield, Preſident,

Samuel L. Mitchill, Samuel Coates,
William Dunlap, James Todd,
Elihu H. Smith, Francis Johonnett,
Richard Hartshorn, Jeſſe Tyſon,
Joſeph Sloan, Gerrard T. Hopkins,
Samuel P. Griffitts, George Drinker,
Robert Patterſon, Joſeph Anthony.
Caſpar Wiſtar,

The committee to whom was re-committed the addreſs to the free Africans and other free people of color in the United States, made report, which was read, conſidered by paragraphs, and finally agreed to as follows:

TO THE

Free Africans and other free People of color

IN THE

UNITED STATES.

THE Convention of Delegates from the Abolition Societies in the United States, having again aſſembled for the purpoſe of promoting your happineſs, conſider it their duty, once more to call your attention to the advice which was addreſſed to you by the Convention of laſt year; and which we ſubjoin to the preſent addreſs, in order that you may at one view be able to profit by theſe collected advices of your ſincereſt friends. The oftner we re-

view that advice, the more we are impreſſed with its importance, and the more anxious we are to urge your ſtrict and faithful obſervance of it. We ſhall only add thereto, at preſent, one other requeſt, and that is, that you would avoid gaining in all its varied forms—the ruinous and miſerable conſequences of this moſt pernicious evil, are ſo notorious, and ſo generally acknowledged, that we cannot too forcibly endeavour to guard you againſt it. It ſubjects you to the controul of the moſt degrading paſſions, and too generally leads to the loſs of fortune, reputation, and of every good principle.

We can with peculiar ſatisfaction inform you, that ſchools and places of worſhip have been eſtabliſhed, and that they are well attended by people of your color, in New-York, New-Jerſey, Pennſylvania, Maryland, Virginia and other places; and we are happy to find, that many of you have evinced, by your prudent and moral conduct, that you are not unworthy of the freedom you enjoy.

Go on in theſe paths of virtue:—By perſevering in them you will juſtify the ſolicitude and labors of your friends in your behalf, and furniſh an additional argument for the emancipation of ſuch of your brethren as are yet in bondage in the United States and in other parts of the world.

Whereupon,

Reſolved, That the ſaid addreſs be ſigned by the Preſident, atteſted by the Secretary, and that three thouſand copies thereof together with a like number of the former addreſs to the ſame people, be printed in the form of hand bills, to be diſtributed by the different Abolition Societies, in ſuch way as may to them appear the moſt proper.

The committee to whom was re-committed the letter to the ſociety of the friends of the blacks of Paris brought in their report, which was conſidered by paragraphs, amended and finally agreed to.

The letter to the Secretary of the treaſury was read a ſecond time and adopted as follows:

The Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies eſtabliſhed in the United States, in Convention aſſembled at Philadelphia,

Reſpectfully repreſent,

That it appears, by information received by us, that the act of Congreſs, paſſed March twenty-ſecond, 1794, prohibiting our citizens from ſupplying foreign nations with ſlaves, is evaded in certain parts of the union, by the ſhipment of one, two, or a few ſlaves for ſale in a foreign port, on board of veſſels not ſpecially fitted out for carrying on the ſlave trade. The Convention have taken the opinion of counſel on the ſubject, and are aſſured, that ſuch ſhipments are equally a breach of law with thoſe made on board of veſſels originally deſtined to this traffic; this

aſſurance, derived from reſpectable authority, encourages us to make application to you, as the proper officer of the government of the United States, to exert the powers with which you are inveſted, for the prevention of the offences of which we complain. Hitherto they have been committed with impunity, from a perſuaſion, on the part of the collectors of certain ports, that the prohibitions of the law did not extend to the caſes referred to. But if, in the opinion of the Secretary of the Treaſury, the exiſting law of Congreſs is deſigned to include theſe caſes in its reſtrictions of the commerce in men, we feel a firm conviction that he will not refuſe his friendly interference in its ſupport, on the preſent occaſion; but will readily conſent to forward ſuch inſtructions to the proper officers, as ſhall prevent all future doubt in reſpect to the meaning of the law, and all future connivance at its violation. The difficulty of bringing to juſtice thoſe who are concerned in evading the proviſions of the law in queſtion, in thoſe parts of the union where they are moſt common, renders it neceſſary that great care ſhould be taken to remove every poſſible pretext for acting in oppoſition to its true intent. The force of this remark, we have no doubt, will be fully comprehended by the Secretary of the Treaſury, and juſtify the propriety of this addreſs.

The letter to the Secretary of State of the United States, was read a ſecond time and adopted in the following words:

The Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies eſtabliſhed in the United States, in Convention aſſembled at Philadelphia,

Reſpectfully repreſent,

That the recent condemnation of two veſſels engaged in a commerce contrary to the act of Congreſs of March twenty-ſecond, 1794, which prohibits the citizens of theſe ſtates from ſupplying foreign nations with ſlaves, has furniſhed us with ſufficient evidence to prove that the Daniſh flag and regiſters have been made uſe of to cover theſe clandeſtine undertakings. Under theſe circumſtances we feel ourſelves impelled by the powerful motives of humanity and duty to our country, to forward the enclоſed evidence, duly given to the Diſtrict Court of Pennſylvania, and to requeſt ſuch aid and interference of the Executive of the United States with the Court of Denmark and other foreign powers, under whoſe authority ſuch practices now obtain, or may hereafter be attempted, as may be conſiſtent with propriety, to prevent the uſe of their flag and regiſters by citizens of the United States under any pretence whatever for the purpoſe of carrying on the commerce in men.

The following authenticated decree of the National Convention of France, was preſented by one of the delegates of Pennſylvania:

DECREE,

Which declares, that the ſlavery of the negroes is aboliſhed in all the colonies, and refers it to the committee of Public Safety to be put into form, and to report what meaſures are to be taken to carry it into effect.

Sixteenth Pluvios, ſecond year.

The National Convention declares, that the ſlavery of the negroes is aboliſhed in all the colonies: and therefore decrees, that all men, without diſtinction of color, who reſide in the colonies, are French citizens, and ſhall enjoy all thoſe rights ſecured to them by the Conſtitution.

Referred to the committee of public ſafety to report, forthwith, on the meaſures to be taken to carry this decree into effect.

(True copy.)

SONTHONAX,
RAIMOND.

Members of the Commiſſion, delegated by the French government to St. Domingo.

PASCAL, *Secretary General.**

* Extract from the twelfth article of the Conſular Convention, between France and the United States:

" All differences and ſuits between French citizens in the United States and between American citizens in the dominions of France, ſhall be determined by the reſpective Conſuls and Vice Conſuls, either by a reference to arbitrators, or by a ſummary judgment and without coſts—and no officer of the country, civil or military, ſhall interfere therein, or take any part whatever in the matter."

Whereupon, On motion,

Reſolved, That there be ſent with the circular addreſs to each of the different Abolition Societies a copy thereof, certified by the proper officer in the United States.

The addreſs to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, was read a ſecond time by paragraphs, and adopted as follows, *viz.*

To the Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

To inform you of our proceedings; to ſolicit your further advice and aſſiſtance; and to requeſt your ſpecial attention to the original object of our meetings, we now addreſs you.

We have, as formerly, gone through our buſineſs with harmony and ſatisfaction; the peculiar objects thereof will appear from our minutes, herewith tranſmitted; and we can truly add, that the important advantages evidently ariſing from ſuch a collection of information and exchange of ſentiment are too obvious, not to unite us in the recommendation, that a ſimilar Convention of delegates from the different abolition ſocieties, be held in this city on the firſt day of June, 1798.

The non-compliance of ſeveral ſocieties with this propoſal for ſome years paſt, induces us to believe that ſome obſtacles may exiſt, which poſſibly might be removed; we therefore requeſt, that where it is not agreed to ſend delegates, ſuch ſocieties would favor the Convention, in writing, with their determi-

nation and the cauſes of it. This will better enable the Convention to judge of the moſt proper mode of proceeding in future.

A table, containing the requiſitions of this and the former Conventions, and how far they have hitherto been complied with by each ſociety, will ſhew the propriety and and neceſſity of fulfilling theſe requiſitions; which, after being thus pointed out need not now be further inſiſted on.

When we conſider the extenſive influence of education on ſociety, we think a due attention to the inſtruction of the blacks and people of color of every deſcription cannot be too forcibly impreſſed. This will apply not merely to what is called ſchool learning, but eſſentially conſiſts in inculcating the ſound principles of morality and religion as well as habits of temperance and induſtry. From a continued regard to the welfare of this much injured and much oppreſſed people, we have again addreſſed them on ſuch points as we judged would be moſt beneficial; but it will in a great degree reſt with you to circulate and enforce the advice recommended: and we may add, that, as the evils which muſt neceſſarily reſult from their being retained in a ſtate of ignorance are incalculable, ſo it is, in our opinion, the greateſt and perhaps the only important ſervice we can render to them and to our country, to diſſeminate learning and morality amongſt them, thus raiſing them gradually and ſafely to that level, to which they muſt, in the courſe of time, inevitably attain.

The different Conventions have from year to year, endeavoured to procure from the Abolition Societies, every kind of information which may illuſtrate the hiſtory of ſlavery in the United States; we now repeat their requeſt, with a view to the formation of a hiſtory of this important ſubject.

From the general accounts received, as well as from our own obſervations, we are induced ſtrongly to recommend, that where ſeveral Abolition Societies exiſt in one ſtate, they would, if poſſible, form a general plan of union or confederation, ſo as, on all important occaſions, to act in concert.

You are already well informed of the act of Congreſs of March twenty-ſecond, 1794, prohibiting the citizens of the United States from ſupplying foreign nations with ſlaves; you will alſo moſt probably have heard that this wiſe and humane law has been too frequently violated by our citizens; in conſequence of which the Abolition Societies of Pennſylvania, New-York and Providence, have ſeverally commenced proſecutions againſt divers perſons and veſſels, engaged in this abominable traffic; the firſt named ſociety has been ſucceſsful in the two proſecutions they undertook. The veſſels have been condemned in the Diſtrict Court of Pennſylvania and of the United States of America, and actions are pending againſt the maſters and owners in the Circuit Court of the United States in and for the Pennſylvania diſtrict of

middle circuit. There is good ground to believe that the other ſocieties will meet with equal ſucceſs.

Beſides the information mutually given by ſocieties to each other as occaſion may require, to aſſiſt them in checking ſuch clandeſtine practices, we believe it would be highly uſeful to forward every particular that comes to your knowledge on this ſubject, to the next Convention, who may make a very important uſe of it.

The difficulties which have continually occurred reſpecting the blacks and people of color who have for ſeveral years paſt emigrated from the French Weſt-Indies into the United States have engaged the attention of this and the preceding Conventions. To remove theſe difficulties, we tranſmit you a certified copy of an authenticated decree of the National Convention of France, of the ſixteenth Pluvioſe, ſecond year of the Republic; (February fifth, 1794) which has been lately received by the Pennſylvania Abolition Society. With this decree, ſince fully confirmed by the French conſtitution of 1795, we believe you will have it in your power to afford every legal and effectual aſſiſtance to theſe unfortunate people.

There yet remains a ſubject which, though often urged, ſtill continues to demand our ſerious attention; we allude to the moſt proper means of extending the principles of juſt and equal liberty amongſt mankind: and

as we profeſs to aſſume no other powers than thoſe of perſuaſion and convincement, founded on the unerring baſis of truth and juſtice, we wiſh you duly to advert to the magnitude of the cauſe in which we are engaged, to perſevere with patience and fortitude in your applications to legiſlative bodies and courts of juſtice, for the relief of our unfortunate African brethren, and to continue to enlighten the public mind, by ſpreading as much as poſſible, all kind of uſeful information on the ſubject: that thus we may, in every form, and on every occaſion, be ready to plead the cauſe of the oppreſſed, in the language of perſuaſion and of truth. And then we ſhall have done our duty; and then we may, in humble confidence, look up for the bleſſing and protection of the great Father of all, *whoſe ways are juſt and equal*, and *who hath made of one blood all nations of men*.

It was, on motion,

Reſolved, That ſo much of the reports from the ſeveral ſocieties, as relates to the ſubject of the education of Africans, and their deſcendants, be annexed in the form of an appendix to the printed minutes of this Convention.

Reſolved, That it be recommended, that all communications intended for the enſuing Convention, be directed to the care of James Pemberton, Philadelphia, Preſident of the Pennſylvania ſociety for promoting the abolition of ſlavery.

Reſolved, That Samuel P. Griffitts, Samuel Coates, James Todd and Robert Patterſon, be a committee to ſuperintend the publication and diſtribution of the minutes of this Convention, as well as of the addreſs to the free blacks, the addreſſes to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, and the letters and memorials ordered by this Convention; to have the minutes of this year's proceedings copied, and to give three months notice to the ſocieties of the meeting of the Convention next year.

Reſolved, That the abſtracts of the laws of the ſeveral ſtates, reſpecting ſlavery and ſlaves, as reported by the committee appointed to execute them, be referred to the committee for printing and diſtributing the minutes of this Convention; who are hereby directed to obtain any neceſſary corrections, and cauſe them to be annexed as an appendix to the minutes aforeſaid.

Reſolved, That the ſame committee preſent to the Speaker of the Senate of Pennſylvania, the thanks of this Convention for the uſe of the Senate Chamber.

Reſolved, That fifteen hundred copies of the proceedings of the Convention be printed and diſtributed amongſt the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States.

Adjourned, *ſine die.*

Publiſhed by order of the Convention,

THOMAS P. COPE *Secretary.*

Philadelphia, May 9th. 1797.

APPENDIX.

Extract from the reports of the Abolition Societies respecting education.

New-York Society.

THE New York society many years since, instituted a school for the instruction of African descendants, in various species of knowledge; this institution, which considerable experience has proved to be of the highest importance to the progress of emancipation and the welfare of the subjects of our care, has since the last Convention received a new share of our attention, undergone a renovation, and is now on a more flourishing and respectable footing than at any former period. By an appropriation of the principal part of the funds of the society, to this object, together with the annual dividend of the bounty of the state, and the contributions of individuals, we have, at an expense of more than fourteen hundred pounds, purchased a building and lot suitable for our purpose, and the school is now maintained at the rate of about one thousand dollars a year. This institution, as the Convention will observe from the constitution of the society, is under the immediate inspection of a board of Trustees.* It is provided with a

* *Constitution of the New-York Society, for promoting the manumission of slaves and protecting such of them as have been or may be liberated.*

ARTICLE VIII.

1. There shall be elected a Board of Trustees for the African school, to consist of ten Members, besides the Chairman and Secretary. At every stated meeting of the society, the two Members first named on the list shall go out of office, and a new appointment of the like number be made.

2. The Trustees are to meet statedly once every month, and at such other times as the Chairman shall require, and at such places as he may direct, or the majority of them at any meeting shall appoint. Four of the Members with the Chairman shall make a sufficient board to transact business, and if the Chairman be absent five Members including a Chairman to be appointed for the time, shall constitute a board.

3. The Trustees are empowered to procure the necessary instructors, and to provide all necessary accommodations for the school, and to make contracts for those purposes, which shall be binding on the society.

maſter, uſher and miſtreſs, by whom the pupils are taught reading, penmanſhip, arithmetic, Engliſh grammar and geography, and the female ſcholars, in addition, needle-work. The number of ſcholars on the firſt of January 1797, was one hundred and twenty-two; of whom ſixty-three were males, and fifty-nine females, and this is about the uſual number; many of them being of ſufficient age to be occaſionally ſerviceable to their parents and maſters, ſome irregularity unavoidably happens in their attendance, but this is not ſo conſiderable but that more than two-thirds are generally preſent. The appearance, conduct and progreſs of this ſchool, in the opinion of the Truſtees, would do credit to any inſtitution of the kind, and is exceeded by none in the city.

On the whole they exhibit an example of ſucceſsful induſtry, highly honorable to themſelves; gratifying to their parents, encouraging to their patrons and conſoling to humanity. Mean while the ſpirit of improvement has diffuſed itſelf among many of their color, who have attained to years of maturity, without the benefits of inſtruction. An evening ſchool under the patronage of the Board of Truſtees, but not at the expenſe of the ſociety, has been

They may make any regulations which they may deem neceſſary for the due government of the ſchool, and direct the courſe of ſtudies and diſcipline therein. They may inſtitute, at the expenſe of the ſociety, ſuch premiums as they may judge proper for the encouragement of the ſcholars in their learning; provided they do not exceed the ſum of ſix pounds in one year. They have power to regulate the admiſſion of ſcholars, and to aſſeſs ſuch taxes as they may think reaſonable and neceſſary on the parents, guardians and maſters of the ſcholars; regular liſts of which aſſeſſments are to be tranſmitted by them to the Regiſter, who is to record the ſame and deliver an atteſted copy thereof to the Treaſurer, who is to collect the ſeveral ſums aſſeſſed of the perſons in ſuch liſts named.

4. It is the duty of the Truſtees to viſit the ſchool once in every month; to examine the ſcholars as to their proficiency and conduct, and to cauſe to be made a written report of the ſtate of the ſchool and of their proceedings, to every ſtated meeting of the ſociety; and to give any further information reſpecting the ſchool and the objects of their appointment, which they may judge neceſſary.

5. The Chairman ſhall preſide at all meetings of the Truſtees, and preſerve order therein, and ſhall have a caſting vote and no other. He may call ſpecial meetings whenever he ſhall think proper, or whenever requeſted by any two of the Truſtees. He is to ſign all reports and other official acts of the board.

6. The Secretary is to keep fair and regular minutes of the proceedings of the Truſtees, to give notice to the Truſtees of the times and places of meeting, and, under the direction and with the aſſiſtance of the Chairman, to prepare all reports to the ſociety.

inſtituted the laſt winter; this ſchool which is conducted by the maſter and uſher of the ſociety ſchool, for their own emolument, is ſupported by the pupils, who amount to forty four, of both ſexes, and themſelves defray the charges of their education. Hitherto a degree of decorum and induſtry has prevailed among them much to their honor and advantage; and it will no doubt be gratifying to the Convention to learn that the uſher in either ſchool, is himſelf of African deſcent, and diſcharges the duties of his office with a zeal, fidelity and ſucceſs, worthy of his character as a man, and his profeſſion as a Chriſtian.

Pennſylvania Society.

EARLY in the year 1793, the committee of the Abolition Society, for improving the condition of the free blacks,*

* *A plan for improving the condition of the free blacks.*

The buſineſs relative to the free blacks ſhall be tranſacted by a committee of twenty-four perſons, annually elected by ballot, at the meeting of this ſociety in the month called April; and in order to perform the different ſervices with expedition, regularity and energy this committee ſhall reſolve itſelf into the following ſub-committees, *viz.*

I. *A Committee of Inſpection*, who ſhall ſuperintend the morals, general conduct and ordinary ſituation of the free negroes, and afford them advice and inſtruction, protection from wrongs and other friendly offices.

II. *A Committee of Guardians*, who ſhall place out children, and young people with ſuitable perſons, that they may (during a moderate time of apprenticeſhip or ſervitude) learn ſome trade or other means of ſubſiſtence. The committee may effect this partly by a perſuaſive influence on parents and the perſons concerned, and partly by co-operating with the laws which are or may be enacted for this and ſimilar purpoſes. In forming contracts on theſe occaſions the committee ſhall ſecure to the ſociety ſo far as may be practicable, the right of guardianſhip over the perſons ſo bound.

III. *A Committee of Education*, who ſhall ſuperintend the ſchool inſtruction of the children and youth of the free blacks; they may either influence them to attend regularly the ſchools already eſtabliſhed in this city, or form others with this view; they ſhall, in either caſe provide, that the pupils may receive ſuch learning as is neceſſary for their future ſituation in life, eſpecially a deep impreſſion of the moſt important and generally acknowledged moral and religious principles. They ſhall alſo procure and preſerve a regular record of the marriages, births and manumiſſions of all free blacks.

IV. *A Committee of Employ*, who ſhall endeavour to procure conſtant employment for thoſe free negroes who are able to work; as the want of

purchaſed on a ground rent of fifteen pounds per annum, a lot of ground ſituate on the north ſide of Cherry ſtreet, between Sixth and Seventh ſtreets, on which they ſoon after placed a frame building and opened a free ſchool for the inſtruction of children of color of both ſexes; in this ſchool are taught, ſpelling, reading, and needle work. Eleanor Harris, a black woman, being judged well qualified, has been employed as their teacher ſince the opening of the ſchool. Her ſalary is one hundred dollars per annum; ſhe is alſo provided with a dwelling in the houſe, and with fire wood. The children are furniſhed with the neceſſary ſchool books. The expenſes of this ſchool are defrayed out of the particular funds of this committee, raiſed by donations, legacies and annual ſubſcriptions. The ſchool is regularly viſited every month by the committee of education. The number of ſcholars who generally attend is thirty.

With a view further to extend the benefits of education to the Africans and their deſcendants, the above named committee for improving the condition of the free blacks, have lately procured additional contributions, ſuppoſed ſufficient to enable them to eſtabliſh two more ſchools, which it is expected will ſhortly be opened, one in the northern, and the other in the ſouthern part of the city.

The committee for improving the condition of the free blacks have alſo afforded pecuniary aſſiſtance to a ſociety of

this would occaſion poverty, idleneſs and many vicious habits. The committee will by ſedulous inquiry be enabled to find common labour for a great number; they will alſo provide that ſuch as indicate proper talents may learn various trades, which may be done by prevailing upon them to bind themſelves for ſuch a term of years as ſhall compenſate their maſters for the expenſe and trouble of inſtruction and maintenance. The committee may attempt the inſtitution of ſome uſeful and ſimple manufactures, which require but little ſkill, and alſo may aſſiſt in commencing buſineſs, ſuch as appear to be qualified for it.

Whenever the committee of inſpection ſhall find perſons of any particular deſcription requiring attention, they ſhall immediately direct them to that committee of whoſe care they are the proper objects.

In matters of a mixed nature the committees ſhall conſer, and if neceſſary, act in concert: Affairs of great importance ſhall be referred to the whole committee.

The expenſe incurred by the proſecution of this plan, ſhall be defrayed by a fund to be formed by donations or ſubſcriptions for theſe particular purpoſes, and to be kept ſeparate from the other funds of this ſociety. The committee ſhall make a report of their proceedings and of the ſtate of their ſtock, to the ſociety at their quarterly meetings in the months called April and October.

young men, chiefly members of the Abolition Society, who have kept an evening school since the year 1788, for the instruction of black men, in reading, writing and arithmetic, during the fall and winter months. A school room was furnished them by the overseers of the school held in Willings alley, hereafter to be mentioned; they have generally employed a master, and have themselves served alternately as his assistants. The blacks are provided with books, &c. and taught gratis. The expense is now defrayed by voluntary contributions of the society of young men. About sixty scholars are at present taught in this school. A First-day or Sunday school is kept at this house in the summer season, for the instruction of black men in reading and writing by the same society of young men.

Besides the schools more particularly under the care and direction of the society, there are several others in this city, established for the improvement of the people of color in various branches of useful learning.

In the year 1771, two schools for the instruction of black children, male and female, were instituted by the society of Friends, on a lot of ground belonging to them in Willings-alley—An house was built, and the school supported by voluntary contributions from the members of that society, until the year 1786, when by a legacy of Anthony Benezet, amounting to a ground rent of ninety pounds per annum, a donation of five hundred pounds sterling from England, and some legacies in this country, all of which were vested in ground rents, the yearly income of the the school was near two hundred pounds—the salaries of the master and mistress, expense of fire-wood, books and stationary, amount to about two hundred and thirty-two pounds per annum. The balance is made up by the society of Friends. The teachers live in the house, rent free, and are provided with fire-wood—no children of color whether slaves or others are refused admittance to this school. The average number in each school is about forty scholars. These schools are under the care of a committee of twelve persons appointed by the society of Friends, who visit them regularly once a month.

In the year 1795, a number of young women of this city, formed a society for the purpose of teaching black women and girls reading and writing. They have procured a school room, give their personal attendance as teachers alternately, provide fire wood, and for those who are not able to procure them, books and stationary. The expense is defrayed by voluntary contributions—the school

is held in the evening during the fall and winter months—the average number of ſcholars who attend is thirty.

In the winter of 1796, a Firſt-day or Sunday ſchool for the education of the black people in reading and writing was opened by a member of the Abolition Society at the Methodiſt African meeting houſe in Sixth-ſtreet, and held between the hours of public worſhip. From ſixty to ninety perſons, chiefly adults of both ſexes, uſually attended. The original inſtitutor of this ſchool was ſoon afterwards aſſiſted by ſeveral young men, moſtly members of the Abolition Society. The generality of the ſcholars were furniſhed with books gratis; the fund for defraying the neceſſary expenſes was raiſed by contributions ſolicited by the founder, who propoſes in lieu of the day ſchool to keep one in the evening on a ſimilar plan, during the winter ſeaſon.

All the accounts procured of the different ſchools concur in declaring, that the improvement and behaviour of the people of color is encouraging and ſatisfactory.

Alexandria Society.

THE committee appointed for carrying into effect the plan of education adopted by the ſociety, beg leave to make the following report, reſpecting the ſtate, progreſs and proſpect of the ſchool which they have organized in conformity with the aforeſaid plan.*

* *Plan of Education*—Whereas the views of this ſociety are not only to obtain legal juſtice for the oppreſſed Africans and their deſcendants, and to mitigate their ſufferings, but alſo to ameliorate their condition in general as far as may be practicable; as well as that all others in indigent circumſtances, who may appear fit objects of the patronage of the ſociety, may receive benefit therefrom.

The ſociety contemplating theſe objects, and ſenſible that a proper education, directed to the improvement of the mind and the regulation of the heart, is a fruitful ſource of human happineſs, are deſirous that theſe unhappy people may be admitted to a participation of its benefits. But the ſociety being apprehenſive that little opportunity will be afforded them of attending to theſe important advantages during that part of the week allotted to bodily labour. It is therefore reſolved—that for the attainment of this deſirable end, Sunday ſchools be eſtabliſhed in this town, under the patronage and by the direction of the ſociety; on the principles and in manner following:

Your committee having divided themſelves into claſſes, and engaged Benjamin Davis as teacher, for four months, at the rate of ſixty dollars a year, opened ſchool on Sunday the eleventh of December laſt in Archibald M'Lean's ſchool room, on which day they admitted ſeventeen ſcholars: the number has increaſed every ſchool day ſince, and at preſent

A committee of twelve members of the ſociety ſhall be appointed for carrying into effect this reſolution, a majority of whom ſhall conſtitute a quorum.

It ſhall be the duty of ſaid committee when appointed, to procure ſuitable apartments (gratis, if poſſible) for the accommodation of ſcholars to be hereafter admitted, and to employ, at the expenſe of the ſociety, competent teachers, to take the immediate charge of ſaid ſchools.

In theſe ſeminaries ſhall be taught, orthography, reading, writing and the more uſeful parts of arithmetic; and the morals of the pupils ſhall be carefully attended to.

Theſe ſchools ſhall be open indiſcriminately for the reception of children of indigent parents, whoſe circumſtances in life, exclude them from other means of education, but more eſpecially the children of free blacks and mulattoes, and the ſlaves of all who chooſe to ſend them; alſo, free adults of the aforementioned deſcription who may be thought able to pay, and the children of ſuch ſhall be admitted at a low rate of tuition, and all monies ſo raiſed, ſhall be appropriated to the ſole uſe of ſaid inſtitution.

The committee ſhall be choſen for one year in the ſame manner as other officers—as ſoon as convenient after their election, they ſhall divide themſelves equally into two claſſes, the firſt of which ſhall vacate their places at the end of ſix months, and the ſecond at the end of twelve months; ſo that one half ſhall be choſen every ſix months—and no member who ſhall have ſerved out the regular term of his appointment, ſhall be eligible for the next ſix months—in caſe of vacancies in their own body, they ſhall have power to fill ſuch vacancies till the next election.

The committee ſhall divide themſelves into three claſſes, one of which in rotation ſhall attend ſaid ſchools perſonally every Sabbath day, to inſpect the ſtate of them, ſee that the teachers perform their duty, and for any other purpoſes, which they may conceive calculated to promote the ends of the inſtitution.

Moreover if the committee ſhall not be able as ſoon as requiſite, to procure ſuitable teachers, or if at any time vacancies happen, in either caſe, the committee ſhall themſelves by claſſes, take charge of ſuch ſchool or ſchools as may be deſtitute till it or they can be ſupplied.

The committee ſhall, under the aforeſaid regulations, have a diſcretionary power in the management of ſaid inſtitution; they ſhall have the ſole right of admitting, rejecting and expelling ſcholars, of fixing the hours of commencing and breaking up ſchool: *Provided nevertheleſs*, that the concurrence of two-thirds of the members ſhall be neceſſary for the expulſion of any ſcholar whom they may deem unworthy of the inſtitution; they ſhall meet at leaſt once a month, for the tranſaction of buſineſs, and ſhall at each quarterly meeting of the ſociety, make report of their proceedings, and of the ſtate of the inſtitution.

amounts to one hundred and eight who have been admitted. Of this number ten have attended irregularly and agreeably to a reſolve of the committee paſſed the fourth inſtant, for excluding ſuch as abſent themſelves four ſchool days ſucceſſively without a ſatisfactory excuſe, your committee apprehend moſt of the above mentioned delinquents will vacate their places.

In regard to the advancement of the pupils in learning, your committee ſtate, that they have four who write a very legible hand, read the ſcriptures with a tolerable facility and have commenced arithmetic: eight others are capable of reading the ſcriptures, but have as yet made ſmall advancement in writing: fifteen can ſpell words of three or four ſyllables and read eaſy leſſons: ſome of theſe have been put to writing: the reſidue are chiefly learning the alphabet or to ſpell monoſyllables.

Many of the pupils (eſpecially thoſe of mature age) evince a ſtrong deſire and conſiderable aptitude for learning. Their deportment in general is orderly and reſpectful, and their external appearance very decent.

Your committee feel gratified in having it in their power to report thus favourably of the inſtitution. They flatter themſelves that its effects will be laſtingly beneficial in improving the minds and amending the morals of thoſe for whoſe advantage it was eſtabliſhed.

Your committee cannot diſmiſs the ſubject without earneſtly recommending this infant inſtitution to the vigilant guardianſhip of the ſociety; expreſſing at the ſame time their ſanguine hopes of its ultimate ſucceſs and extenſive utility.

A Table shewing the recommendations and requisitions of the Convention of 1796, *and of former Conventions, and how far they have hitherto been complied with by each Society.*

I. *To send delegates to a Convention to meet at Philadelphia in May,* 1797.

New-York society,	complied.
New-Jersey society,	ditto.
Pennsylvania society,	ditto.
Maryland society, *(at Baltimore)*	ditto.
Choptank society, *(Maryland)*	ditto.
Alexandria society, *(Virginia)*	ditto.
Virginia society, *(at Richmond)*	ditto.

Rhode-Island, Connecticut, Washington *(Pennsylvania,)* Wilmington *(Delaware,)* Delaware, Chester-town *(Maryland,)* Winchester *(Virginia,)* and Kentucky societies sent none.

II. *To transmit certified copies of all the laws in the respective states relating to slavery; as well of those repealed as of those in force.*

Connecticut	transmitted in 1795.
New-York,	in 1797.
New-Jersey,	in 1796.
Pennsylvania,	in 1797.
Maryland,	in 1797.
Virginia and Alexandria.	in 1797, a copy of professor Tucker's dissertation on slavery, which contains the substance of all the laws of Virginia respecting slavery from its settlement till 1794. Copies of the laws since that period also sent.

Rhode Island, Delaware, and Kentucky societies have not yet transmitted.

III. *To forward correct lists of the officers and other members of each respective society.*

New-York complied in 1796 and 1797, number of members two hundred and fifty.

New-Jersey complied partially.

Pennſylvania complied in 1797. Members five hundred and ninety one.
Wilmington complied in 1796. Members about ſixty.
Maryland complied in 1797. Members two hundred and thirty-one.
Choptank complied in 1797. Members twenty-five.
Alexandria complied in 1797. Members ſixty-two.
Virginia complied in 1796 and 1797. Members one dred and forty-ſeven.

Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties have not yet ſent liſts of their members.

IV. *An account of the proceedings of each ſociety in relieving perſons unlawfully held in bondage.*

New-York. Since January 1796, have had complaints from ninety perſons, Africans or of African deſcent—twenty-nine freed on the law prohibiting importation—ſeven as free born—two unſucceſsful—heavy damages recovered in ſome inſtances—twenty-one caſes now in ſuit—nineteen under conſideration.

New-Jerſey ſociety. Many manumiſſions have been effected ſince January 1796, but no preciſe information is yet received to what number and under what circumſtances.

Pennſylvania ſociety. It appears from the minutes of the acting committee of the ſociety, that many hundreds of Africans have been liberated through their aid ſince the inſtitution of the ſociety.

Wilmington ſociety. Has ſent a liſt of perſons liberated by their agency up to 1796, amounting to eighty ſince 1788.

Maryland ſociety at Baltimore. A variety of ſuits were inſtituted againſt the unlawful holders of ſlaves laſt year, and in conſequence many have been liberated—there are ſeveral ſuits now pending in law, which are expected to have the like favorable iſſue.

Choptank ſociety. This ſociety has exerted itſelf in favor of the Africans, for ſeven years; and been the inſtrument of liberating more than ſixty individuals, and has failed but in a ſingle application to a court of juſtice in their behalf.

Alexandria society. Twenty-six complaints made to the society—six persons relieved on the law against importation; five will probably be relieved, the other fourteen cases on which as well as on the above five suits are pending are doubtful. A suit in Norfolk court and one in North Carolina now carrying on at the expense of this society.

Virginia society. Nothing of material importance since the convention of 1796. Suits commenced before now pending in behalf of between twenty and thirty persons.

Rhode-Island, Connecticut, Washington, Delaware, Chester-town, Wincheſter, and Kentucky societies sent no account.

V. *A statement of the condition of the blacks in each state both bond and free, with respect to the property of the free, and the employment and moral conduct of all.*

New-York. The number of people of color in the state of New-York not known—exceeds two thousand—in the city names of one thousand collected—of these more than half are free, employed as servants, labourers, sailors, mechanics, &c.—a few are small traders—condition tolerable—many in town and country freeholders—several worth from three hundred to thirteen hundred dollars—various associations among the free blacks for mutual support, benefit and improvement—one has a lot for a burying ground and the scite of a church worth fifteen hundred dollars.

In a state of progressive improvement.

New-Jersey. Condition, as to enjoyments of life and respectability, much the same as in New-York.

Pennsylvania. Complied with in 1796. See the minutes of the convention of that year—page 20 and 21.

Maryland at Baltimore & Choptank. The condition of the blacks from the information this society has received is greatly ameliorated, and some few of the free are enabled to provide for themselves without manual labor—moral conduct equal to that of the whites in like circumstances—minute information not yet obtained.

Alexandria. Generally ſlaves—their treatment leſs rigorous than formerly—moral conduct of the free generally good—as labourers preferred to the whites.

From Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Virginia, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties—none ſent.

VI. *Reports of trials and adjudications relative to Africans.*

New-York. None ever preſerved in this ſtate.

New-Jerſey. Sent in 1796.

Pennſylvania. None have been preſerved by the ſociety, but ſome have been publiſhed and others are now preparing for publication.

Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Maryland, Cheſter-town, Choptank, Alexandria, Virginia, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties—ſent none.

VII. *Endeavours uſed to obtain a repeal or amelioration of the laws reſpecting ſlavery.*

New-York. A bill for the gradual abolition of ſlavery brought into the Legiſlature at their laſt ſeſſion, but poſtponed till the next ſeſſion.

New-Jerſey. A bill brought into the laſt ſeſſion of the Legiſlature for a gradual abolition of ſlavery which is poſtponed to the next ſeſſion as in New-York.

Pennſylvania. A bill for the total abolition of ſlavery was brought into and read in the Houſe of Repreſentatives near the cloſe of the laſt ſeſſion of the Legiſlature, but lies over to the next ſeſſion.

Maryland at Baltimore. No attempt has been made ſince the Convention of 1796.

Alexandria. Have drawn up and mean to preſent to the next Legiſlature, a remonſtrance againſt a late law of the ſtate which is peculiarly ſevere againſt Africans.

Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Choptank, Virginia, Wincheſter, and Kentucky ſocieties tranſmitted no information.

VIII. *The progress made in extending to Africans the benefits of instruction.*

New-York. Houſe and lot for a ſchool purchaſed by the ſociety ſince January 1796—ſchool has exiſted many years—more flouriſhing now than ever—property of the ſociety for its accommodation worth upwards of three thouſand five hundred dollars—annual expenſe of the ſchool one thouſand dollars—has a maſter, uſher and miſtreſs—ſcholars taught reading, penmanſhip, arithmetic, Engliſh grammar and geography—girls (additionally) needle work—number one hundred and twenty-two—boys ſixty three—girls fifty-nine—improve faſt and behave as well as any other children—evening ſchool in the winter for free blacks, adults—taught by the maſter and uſher of the ſociety's ſchool—number, forty-four—uſher a black man.

New-Jerſey. Nothing done by the ſociety—a bill is now pending before the Legiſlature providing for the inſtruction of all children in the ſtate, which, if carried, will include the Africans as well as the whites.

Pennſylvania. Within the city and liberties of Philadelphia there are at preſent ſeven ſchools for the education of people of color; at which perhaps near three hundred ſcholars of both ſexes uſually attend—two other ſchools are about to be opened for the ſame purpoſe.

Maryland at Baltimore. Several children of Africans and other people of color now under a courſe of inſtruction—an academy (of which notice was given to the laſt convention) will be opened the enſuing ſeaſon, and ſuitable teachers provided.

Alexandria. A Sunday ſchool opened by this ſociety in December, 1795, for the reception of Africans and their deſcendants—the number of ſcholars who uſually attend is one hundred and eight—they are inſtructed in reading, penmanſhip and arithmetic.

From Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Choptank, Virginia, Wincheſter, and Kentucky ſocieties—no information received.

IX. *To eſtabliſh periodical diſcourſes on the ſubject of ſlavery and the means of its abolition.*

Connecticut. No information this year—there have been ſeven or eight diſcourſes delivered before the ſociety, the greater part of which have been printed and circulated extenſively.

New-York. The firſt annual diſcourſe delivered before this ſociety the twelfth of April, 1797.

Pennſylvania. Not deemed neceſſary in this ſtate, where the general ſentiments of the people are, in a great degree, congenial with thoſe of the ſociety.

Maryland. Complied with.

Rhode-Iſland, New-Jerſey, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Choptank, Alexandria, Virginia, Wincheſter, and Kentucky ſocieties tranſmitted no information on the ſubject.

X. *To keep accurate regiſters of all deeds of manumiſſion executed within the precincts of each ſociety.*

New-York. Attended to by this ſociety from the firſt, ſo far as depended on itſelf.

Pennſylvania. A regiſter of manumiſſions kept by the acting committee.

Maryland at Baltimore, and Choptank. The ſociety preſerve a regiſter—and all manumiſſions are matter of record in the county courts.

Alexandria. A regiſter is kept by the ſociety, manumiſſions are recorded in the court of Common Pleas.

Virginia. Deeds of emancipation are recorded in the county courts.

From Rhode Iſland, Connecticut, New-Jerſey, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties—no information.

XI. *To diſtribute ſuitable publications tending to promote the deſign of the inſtitutions.*

New-York. Attended to partially.

New-Jerſey. Attended to generally.

Pennſylvania. Faithfully attended to.

Alexandria. Attended to, and a new publication is ſoon to be made on the ſubject of ſlavery.

From Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Maryland, Cheſter town, Choptank, Virginia, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties—no information.

XII. *To endeavour to free negroes from St. Domingo retained here as ſlaves, contrary to the decree of the National Convention of France.*

Pennſylvania. Acted on as caſes have occurred—from the other ſocieties—no information.

XIII. *To diſcourage the uſe of articles manufactured by ſlaves.*

No particular meaſures on this ſubject are repreſented as being adopted by any of the ſocieties.

XIV. *To diſtribute the addreſs to the free people of color from the convention of* 1796.

New-York, New-Jerſey, Pennſylvania, Maryland, and Alexandria ſocieties—done.

Choptank ſociety. Not received till late by this ſociety.

Virginia ſociety. Done in part.

From Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties—no information.

XV. *To ſend copies of the conſtitutions of the reſpective ſocieties.*

Connecticut. Sent.
New-York. Sent the original in 1796, and the reviſed one in 1797.
New-Jerſey. Sent in 1796.
Pennſylvania. ditto.
Wilmington. ditto.
Maryland. ditto.
Alexandria. Sent 1797.
Virginia. Sent 1796.

Rhode-Iſland, Waſhington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Choptank, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties ſent none.

The following abſtracts of the exiſting laws reſpecting ſlavery in the States of Connecticut, New-York, New-Jerſey, Pennſylvania, Maryland and Virginia, are publiſhed for general information—The inconſiſtency of ſeveral of theſe laws ariſes from the nature of the ſubject, and though much care has been taken to make theſe abſtracts plain and intelligible, yet we do not ſuppoſe we have fully ſucceeded in this firſt eſſay. We hope that fuller documents and more conſiſtent laws, will enable future Conventions to perform this taſk with greater perſpicuity and uſefulneſs.

By the exiſting laws of Connecticut:

Any negro, molatto, or indian ſervant or ſlave, who ſhall be found wandering out of the bounds of the place to which he belongs, without a paſs from a magiſtrate or from his owner, ſhall be treated as a runaway, and citizens are impowered to ſecure ſueh perſons and bring them before the magiſtrate, the owner being liable for all charges accruing thereby.

Ferry men are required not to ſuffer ſueh perſons to paſs their ferries under penalty of twenty ſhillings for each offence, to the owner; and if free negroes ſhall travel without ſuch certificate, and be ſtopped or taken up, they ſhall pay all charges ariſing thereby.

Any perſon preſuming to buy or receive from an indian, molatto or negro ſervant or ſlave, any money or goods without order from the owner, ſhall be ſentenced to reſtore all ſuch articles and alſo forfeit double the value thereof, and treble, if the article is not to be obtained: and if the perſon ſo offending do not make reſtitution as awarded, then to be publicly whipt, not exceeding twenty ſtripes, or make ſatisfaction by ſervice. And any indian, negro or molatto ſervant or ſlave, ſo depoſiting or ſelling ſuch articles or money, if it appear they were ſtolen, or that ſhall ſteal any money or goods and ſhall be convicted, (although the buyer or receiver be not found) ſhall be whipt, not exceeding thirty ſtripes, and the things ſtolen if found, returned to the party injured, or the value if not found.

Any ſervant or ſlave, as above, if found from home after nine o'clock at night, may be taken before a magiſtrate, who may order him or her to be whipt on the naked body,

not exceeding ten ſtripes, and pay coſt of court, unleſs redeemed by the maſter's paying a fine not exceeding ten ſhillings: and any perſon entertaining or tolerating any ſuch perſons in his houſe after ſuch hour, ſhall forfeit ten ſhillings.

No ſlave ſhall be imported into this ſtate to be left or ſold, under the penalty of one hundred pounds.

Any perſon manumitting a ſlave is liable to the maintenance of ſuch ſlave; and the ſame as to negro, molatto and Spaniſh indian ſervants for time, whoſe time is expired; except a certificate be procured from the ſelect men empowering ſuch liberation, which they are empowered to grant if to a majority of them it appears that ſuch ſlave or ſervant, is able to ſupport himſelf and is of good and peaceable life and converſation.

No negro or molatto child, born after the firſt day of March one thouſad ſeven hundred and eighty-four, ſhall be held in ſervitude after attaining the age of twenty-five years.

No citizen or reſident of this ſtate, ſhall import or tranſport or buy or ſell or receive on board his or her veſſel, with intent to cauſe to be imported or tranſported, any of the inhabitants of any country in Africa, as ſlaves, or ſervants for term of years: upon penalty of fifty pounds for each perſon ſo imported or tranſported, and of five hundred pounds for every veſſel employed in ſuch importation or tranſportation; and all inſurance on veſſels ſo employed, or ſlaves or ſervants ſo ſhipped is void.

Any perſon who ſhall kidnap, decoy or forcibly carry off, out of this ſtate any free negro, indian or molatto or any perſon entitled to freedom at the age of twenty-five years, or ſhall aid or aſſiſt therein, being duly convicted, ſhall forfeit one hundred pounds, and in addition, ſuch ſum in damages as the court ſhall determine: *Provided* that nothing in this act ſhall operate to prevent perſons removing out of this ſtate, for the purpoſe of reſidence, from carrying or tranſporting with them ſuch negroes or molattoes as belong to them, or to prevent perſons living within this ſtate, from directing their ſervants out of this ſtate about their ordinary and neceſſary buſineſs.

Any owner, maſter or factor of any veſſel clearing out for the coaſt of Africa, or ſuſpected by any citizen of this ſtate, to be intended for the ſlave trade in any part of the world, may on declaration of ſuch ſuſpicion, made on oath to the naval officer, to his ſatisfaction, be required to give bond in one thouſand pounds that none of the natives of Africa, or any other foreign country, ſhall be taken on board ſuch

veſſel, during her voyage, with intent to be tranſported as ſlaves to any other part of the world.

All perſons are required to give in to the Town Clerk of the place where they reſide, on oath, the names of ſuch children as are or ſhall be in their poſſeſſion, as are entitled to freedom at the age of twenty-five years, under penalty of forty ſhillings for every month's neglect, after the time fixed by this act.

No perſon ſhall tranſport or aſſiſt in tranſporting for the purpoſe of ſelling, out of this ſtate, any negro or molatto ſlave or ſervant for time, upon penalty of one hundred pounds. And all notes, bonds, mortgages or ſecurities given in payment for perſons ſo tranſported, are made void.

If any owner of a ſlave ſhall make application to any two of the civil authority, or one of the civil authority and two ſelect men of the town to which he belongs, for the purpoſe of manumitting his ſlave, it ſhall be the duty of ſaid authority if the ſlave is found to be in good health, and not more than forty-five years of age or leſs than twenty-five years, to give to the owner a certificate thereof under their hands: *Provided* the ſlave is deſirous of being made free, and this certificate enables the owner to manumit the ſlave, without incurring any riſque of after maintaining him.

By the act of the Legiſlature of the ſtate of New-York, paſſed the twenty-ſecond of February 1788, *and which comprizes all the laws reſpecting ſlaves, it is enacted:*

That every negro, molatto or muſtee, within the ſtate, who at the time of the paſſing the act, was a ſlave for life, ſhall continue ſuch unleſs manumitted, in the manner preſcribed by the act, or ſet free by ſome future law of the ſtate; and the children of ſuch perſon ſhall follow the condition of the mother, and be adjudged ſlaves. The baptizing of a ſlave is declared not to be a manumiſſion of ſuch ſlave.

Slaves under fifty years of age may be manumitted, by the owners of them, on procuring a certificate from the overſeers of the poor, or two juſtices of the peace, or the Mayor or Recorder and two Aldermen, that ſuch ſlaves ap-

pear to be under fifty years of age, and of sufficient ability to maintain themselves, and having such certificate registered with the Clerk of the city, county or town, where the owner or slave resides; without being obliged to give security to indemnify such city, town or place, or to maintain them after they have become helpless through old age or infirmity. Slaves may, in like manner, be manumitted by will, if the executors procure such certificate.

Or they may be manumitted at any age without such certificate, provided the owner or the executors of any testator, or any other person, in behalf of the slave, will give security at the sessions, or enter into a bond to the state, to save harmless the city, town or place, from the charge of any such slave. And, even if any such person is manumitted by last will, or otherwise, and no certificate be attained or security given, yet such slave shall be considered as freed from the owner or his executors, administrators or assigns, and he or they shall be liable to maintain them when they become helpless and unable to maintain themselves. If the overseers of the poor shall refuse to give the certificate as abovementioned, the owner may appeal to the Quarter Sessions, who are authorized to grant the certificate.

No person can sell slaves to another who is unable to maintain them, under the penalty of twenty pounds; and shall still be deemed owner of such slaves.

Any slave striking a white person may be committed by a Justice of the Peace, and be tried and suffer the punishment inflicted for *petit larceny*.

In all capital cases, negroes or other slaves, shall have the privilege of a trial by jury.

Slaves convicted of any crime, under a capital offence, may on the request of the owner, and at the discretion of the court, be transported out of the state. Slaves are not admitted as witnesses in any cause whatever for or against any person, except that in criminal cases, their evidence may be taken for, or against, each other.

All contracts made with slaves, without consent of their owners, are void. The owners of slaves are liable for their trespasses to the value of five pounds.

No person shall harbour a runaway slave, or trade with a slave without consent of the owner; under the penalty of five pounds.

To prevent the further importation of slaves into the state, it is enacted—That any person who shall sell, as a

ſlave, within this ſtate, any negro or other perſon, who has been imported or brought into the ſtate ſince the firſt of June, 1785, or ſince the paſſing of the act, ſhall be deemed guilty of a public offence, and forfeit one hundred pounds, to be recovered by action of debt with coſts of ſuit, one half to the Treaſurer of the ſtate, and the other half to the perſon ſuing for the ſame—and every ſuch perſon, ſo brought into the ſtate and ſold, is declared to be free—and if any perſon ſhall buy, or, as an agent, ſhall receive any ſlave, with an intent to export or carry ſuch ſlave out of the ſtate to be ſold, ſuch perſon or agent, ſhall, in like manner be deemed guilty of a public offence, and forfeit the ſum of one hundred pounds; and ſuch ſlave, immediately after he ſhall be ſo purchaſed, taken, or received, is declared to be free.

Abſtracts of New-Jerſey laws reſpecting ſlaves, &c.

The act paſſed the twentieth of October, 1694, prohibits the permitting any ſlave to carry any gun or piſtol, or take any dog with him into the woods or plantations, unleſs accompanied by his owner or ſome other white perſon by order of his owner, under the penalty of twenty ſhillings for the firſt offence, and thirty ſhillings for the ſecond, and ten ſhillings more for every offence after; to be recovered of the owner—Inflicts a penalty on ſuffering ſlaves to keep any ſwine without the owners mark, and provides that any perſon lending to any ſlave a piſtol or gun, ſhall forfeit the ſame or twenty ſhillings to the owner of the ſaid ſlave.

The act paſſed March ſeventeenth, 1713, prohibits the trafficking with any negro, indian or molatto ſlave, without the conſent of the owner or other perſon having the care of ſuch ſlave, under the penalty of twenty ſhillings for the firſt offence, and forty ſhillings for the ſecond and every other offence, and authorizes the taking up and whipping any ſlave that may be found five miles from his maſter or miſtreſſes habitation, or that may come out of any other province into New-Jerſey, unleſs ſuch ſlave have leave in writing from his maſter or miſtreſs, or is known to be on his or her buſineſs.

The twelfth ſection of the ſame act preſcribes the penalty of forty ſhillings for every time that any perſon ſhall harbour or entertain the ſlave of another without the conſent of the maſter or miſtreſs, excepting in diſtreſs of weather or other extraordinary occaſion, and if any perſon ſhall harbour, conceal, or aſſiſt in carrying away any ſlave who

ſhall happen to be loſt, die, or be otherwiſe rendered unſerviceable, he ſhall pay the value of ſuch ſlave to the owner.

The thirteenth ſection provides, that no negro, indian or molatto, who ſhall thereafter be made free, ſhall hold or poſſeſs any houſes, lands, tenements or hereditaments in his own right, in fee ſimple or fee tail.

The firſt ſection of an act paſſed October twenty third, 1751, authorizes any Juſtice of the peace, on application to him made by the maſter of any ſervant or ſlave, to cauſe to be brought before him any perſon who may be ſuſpected of having ſold any ſtrong liquor to ſuch ſlave or ſervant without his maſter's conſent, and to tender an oath or affirmation that he has not ſo done, and his refuſal to take the ſaid oath or affirmation ſhall be ſufficient evidence to convict him thereof.

The ſecond and third ſections provide, that if more than five negro or molatto ſlaves ſhall meet and aſſemble together, (unleſs on their maſter or miſtreſſes buſineſs) they ſhall be apprehended and whipped, and if any negro or molatto ſlave ſhall be ſeen from his maſter's houſe after nine o'clock at night, except on his maſter or miſtreſſes buſineſs, or ſhall be ſeen to hunt or carry a gun on the Lord's day, he ſhall be taken before a Juſtice of the peace and whipped; but nothing in the ſaid act ſhall be conſtrued to prevent any negro or molatto ſlave from going to church or meeting, and attending on divine ſervice or from burying their dead with their maſter or miſtreſſes conſent.

A law paſſed March the ſecond, 1786.

Section I, Inflicts a penalty of fifty pounds for bringing a ſlave into the ſtate imported from Africa ſince 1776.

Section II, Inflicts a penalty of twenty pounds for bringing a ſlave into the ſtate though not imported ſince 1776.

Section III, Exempts from the above penalty perſons coming into the ſtate to ſettle, and ſtrangers making a temporary ſtay, provided the ſlaves they bring have not been imported from Africa ſince the year 1776, which ſlaves are not to be ſold in the ſtate.

Section IV, Gives ſuch penalties to the uſe of the ſtate.

Section V, Authorizes the manumiſſion of ſound and rational ſlaves between the ages of twenty one and thirty-five years, by writing under hand and ſeal, under the inſpection of two Overſeurs of the poor and two Juſtices of the peace,

who are to certify the same, and gives the form of such certificate, which shall exempt the master's estate from maintaining the slave so freed if he or she, at a future, time becomes chargable, and orders the manumission and certificate to be recorded in the office of the Clerk of the county.

Section VI, Gives the slave so set free, a legal settlement in the township wherein the master or mistress had a settlement when the slave was thus emancipated, and any possession, duty, employment or paying tax, shall not give a settlement elsewhere.

Section VIII, Authorizes grand juries to take cognizance of inhuman treatment or abuse of slaves permitting the Court to fine the perpetrator, not exceeding five pounds for the first offence and ten pounds for the second, giving the penalty to the township.

Section IX, Prohibits slaves freed in another state, from travelling in this state, and inflicts a penalty of five pounds per week on any person concealing, employing or permitting such to live in their house or on their land, nor may a slave freed in Jersey, travel out of the township or county wherein he was manumitted, without a certificate of his freedom, signed by two Justices and countersigned by the county Clerk under seal of the county Court.

A law passed November the twenty-sixth, 1788.

Section I, Forfeits the vessel, appurtenances and cargo, if fitted out for the slave trade.

Section II, Gives of such forfeiture, $\frac{3}{4}$ to the state and $\frac{1}{4}$ to the prosecutor.

Section III, Inflicts a penalty of fifty pounds on masters of vessels, seamen or other persons for attempting to resist, when about to be seized under this law.

Section VI, Provides that no slave that has resided one year last past in the state, shall be removed out with a design thereby of changing his or her place of abode if of full age, without the consent of such slave, testified on private examination before a Justice of the peace, and if under the age of twenty-one years consent as aforesaid, together with the consent, also, of parents if such minor hath any, the Justice to make a record of such consent and give such slave a copy thereof, with the name, age, former place of abode, the reason of such removal and the name of the place to which he or she is about to go; and any person removing or aiding, or abetting the removal of a slave contrary to

this act, shall forfeit and pay twenty pounds for every such offence, half the penalty to the prosecutor and half to the poor. But this act is not to be construed to hinder a master or mistress who shall remove to and reside in another state, from taking his or her slave or slaves with him or her.

Section V, Puts negro and molatto slaves or free persons on the same footing with regard to trials and punishments, in all criminal cases with white people.

Section VI, Obliges masters and mistresses, to teach all negro and molatto slaves and servants to read, while under the age of twenty-one years, and for refusal or neglect, inflicts a penalty of five pounds.

Abstracts of the existing laws of Pennsylvania.

No person born in this state since the first of March, 1780, shall be considered as a slave or servant for life.

Negro or molatto children born of slaves are to serve till the age of twenty eight years, and to be entitled to similar treatment and freedoms with white servants.

Slaves not duly registered before the first of November, 1780, or in case of run-aways or those employed abroad as seamen within five years after that date, are to be considered as free—The masters to be liable to the Overseers of the poor, where such negro or molatto shall become chargable, unless regularly manumitted before the age of twenty-eight years.

Trials of negroes and molattoes shall be the same as of other persons – but the evidence of a slave shall not be admitted against a freeman.

When sentence of death is executed against a slave, the master shall be indemnified for the loss.

Slaves brought into this state from other states or nations, except the domestic slaves of Members of Congress, of foreign Ministers and Consuls, of persons passing through or sojourning but not becoming residents, and seamen in vessels not belonging to any inhabitant of this state; and (except in the case of Members of Congress, foreign Ministers and Consuls) not retained in the state more than six months, shall be deemed free—but no shelter or relief from this act shall be given to run-aways from slavery or servitude.

No covenant of ſervitude or apprenticeſhip, ſhall be valid for more than ſeven years, or if under twenty-one when bound, till the age of twenty-eight years.

No negro or molatto ſlave or ſervant for a term of years, ſhall be removed out of the ſtate for the purpoſe of changing reſidence or otherwiſe fruſtrating the good intention of this law, without the conſent, legally obtained, of ſuch ſlave or ſervant; nor ſhall any perſon ſell or diſpoſe of any ſuch ſlave or ſervant to any perſon out of the ſtate—penalty ſeventy-five pounds.

Children born of ſlaves, to be duly regiſtered within ſix months after birth—otherwiſe the maſter to loſe all right to the ſervice of ſuch children.

No veſſel ſhall be fitted out from any port in this ſtate, for the purpoſe of carrying on a trade or traffic in ſlaves, under the penalty of forfeiting ſaid veſſel; and every perſon concerned in thus fitting out, aiding or abetting, ſhall pay a penalty of one thouſand pounds.

Huſband and wife, parent and child, in a ſtate of ſlavery or ſervitude for a term of years, ſhall not be ſeparated to a greater diſtance than ten miles, for the purpoſe of changing the place of abode, without the conſent of ſuch huſband or wife legally obtained; or, in the caſe of a child, that it be above the age of four years—penalty fifty pounds.

For kidnapping, or by fraud, force or violence, carrying away any negro or molatto out of this ſtate, a penalty of one hundred pounds, and confinement to hard labor from ſix to twelve months.

By the exiſting laws of Maryland,

Slaves imported or brought into the ſtate either for ſale or to reſide, ceaſe to be the property of the perſon importing or bringing them in and become free, except ſuch perſon be a citizen of the United States, coming with a bona fide intention to reſide and bring ſuch perſons with him as his property, on his removal or within a year after, ſuch ſlaves or their mother having been previouſly reſident for three years in ſome of the United States.

A citizen of this ſtate, owning land and ſlaves employed thereon in an adjoining ſtate, may bring them in for his own uſe but not for ſale; provided ſuch ſlaves or their anceſtors were reſident in ſuch adjoining ſtate before the twenty-firſt of April, 1783, and a liſt of ſuch ſlaves be filed with the Clerk of the county within three months in the form preſcribed by law. This privilege is alſo granted to a citizen of another ſtate owning land in this ſtate, to citizens of this, acquiring property in ſlaves in another ſtate, and to citizens of another ſtate acquiring property in them in this ſtate by marriage, bequeſt, diſtribution or as guardians, who may reſpectively bring in or carry out ſuch ſlaves.

A negro or other ſlave carried out of the ſtate by an executor, adminiſtrator or guardian, may be brought in again by the owner or proprietor.

No perſon can diſpoſe of ſlaves imported or brought in, or their increaſe, unleſs he ſhall have been reſident in the ſtate for three years preceding ſuch ſale, except by laſt will and teſtament, or for the payment of bona fide debts, or in caſe of inteſtacy.

Citizens of France ſeeking an aſylum in this ſtate and becoming reſident therein, may hold their ſlaves; provided that thoſe of a maſter of a family do not exceed five, and thoſe of a ſingle man three in number, and that a liſt of them be recorded with the Clerk of the county. They are not permitted to ſell them in the ſtate, and if a greater number than the law permits are brought in, they muſt be re-ſhipped within a year or they become free.

Perſons brought into this ſtate from any of the United States, and bound to ſervice for a term of years by the laws of the ſtate from which they are brought, ſhall ſerve no longer than ſuch laws oblige them.

Any perſon forcibly or fraudulently tranſporting or carrying out of the ſtate or bringing therein any free negro or molatto, knowing them to be free or entitled to freedom at a certain age, and ſelling them for life or for a longer term than they are bound to ſerve by law, forfeits eight hundred dollars for every ſuch offence, and in caſe of inability to pay, is to be adjudged to labor on the public roads for a period not exceeding five years.

Healthy ſlaves may be manumitted by writing under hand and ſeal, executed in preſence of two witneſſes or by laſt will and teſtament, provided ſuch ſlaves be under forty-five years of age and it be not in prejudice of creditors. Such manumiſſion muſt be recorded, and a copy of the record is received as good evidence.

No petitions for freedom are to originate in the General Court, but muſt be preferred in the Court of the county where the petitioner reſides, and at the inſtance of either party, a trial by jury may be had, upon which, either may challenge peremptorily, twelve jurors: no appeal is allowed from the judgment of ſuch Court, except on matters of law.

The attorney of any petitioner for freedom, is liable for all coſts in caſe of the diſmiſſal of the petition, unleſs the Court under all the circumſtances are of opinion that there were probable grounds, and no new petition can be preferred until the coſts of a former are paid.

Any perſon convicted of giving a paſs to a ſlave or ſervant or aſſiſting by advice or donation or loan the tranſporting of any ſuch ſlave or ſervant, or by other unlawful means depriving the owner of their ſervice, is to be fined not exceeding two hundred dollars.

Stealing of negroes or other ſlaves is puniſhed with death.

A free negro giving or ſelling a certificate of his freedom to a ſlave in order that he may perſonate the grantee of ſuch certificate and thereby obtain his freedom, forfeits a ſum not exceeding three hundred dollars, and upon non-payment may be ſold for a term not exceeding ſeven years.

Free negroes are not permitted to give evidence againſt a white perſon nor in favor of a ſlave petitioning for freedom; neither can they vote at elections or be elected or appointed to any office of profit or truſt.

A ſlave giving falſe teſtimony againſt another ſlave ſhall have one ear cut off on the day of conviction and receive thirty-nine laſhes, and on the following day ſhall have the other ear cut off and the ſame number of laſhes repeated.

No perſon is to join in marriage any negro or molatto ſlave with a white perſon under penalty of five thouſand pounds of tobacco.

Free negroes or molattoes intermarrying with whites are liable to become ſlaves for life except molattoes born of white women who become ſervants for ſeven years.

A white woman having a child by a negro or other ſlave becomes (if free) a ſervant for ſeven years, and if a ſervant is obliged to ſerve ſeven years after her preſent term expires; the ſame penalty is to be inflicted on a free negro having a child by a negro woman who is a ſlave, on a molatto woman having a baſtard child by a ſlave, on a free

negro woman having a baſtard child by a white man and on a white man begetting a baſtard child on a negro woman whether ſhe is a ſlave or free.

The baptiſm of negroes or molattoes is declared not to give any right to freedom.

Maſters permitting their ſlaves to go about begging may be held under recognizance by the county Courts.

The owner of any negro or other ſlave who ſhall ſuffer ſuch ſlave to keep horſes or to raiſe cattle or hogs as his proper right, forfeits five hundred pounds of tobacco and ſuch horſes, &c. are alſo forfeited.

A perſon permitting his ſlave to go at large or to hire himſelf, and the perſon hiring or contracting with any ſuch ſlave, forfeits five pounds per month, except ten days at harveſt or in caſe the ſlave is a pilot.

Any perſon entertaining a runaway ſervant or ſlave, forfeits five hundred pounds of tobacco for every twenty-four hours, and if a free negro or molatto harbours any ſuch ſervant or ſlave he forfeits one thouſand pounds of tobacco: If he be unable to pay, the Juſtices may immediately order ſatisfaction by ſervitude or otherwiſe.

Negroes meeting together from home without licence from their owners or overſeers on the ſabbath or other holy day may be whipped by the conſtable not exceeding thirty-nine laſhes, and any negro of the owner of the place where ſuch meeting may be, refuſing to aſſiſt the conſtable ſhall receive thirty-nine laſhes. Any perſon encouraging the meeting of ſlaves except on lawful occaſions, forfeits one thouſand pounds of tobacco.

Any ſtrange negro coming on a plantation not his maſter's and not on his maſter's lawful occaſions, being ordered to go home and refuſing or delaying ſo to do, may be whipped by order of the owner of ſuch plantation not exceeding thirty-nine laſhes.

Slaves ſelling liquor or keeping entertainment at any muſter-ground, horſe-race, &c. without the order or permiſſion of their owners are liable to be puniſhed at the diſcretion of a Juſtice of the peace not exceeding twenty ſtripes.

A free negro or molatto living idle without any viſible means of maintenance, may be apprehended and obliged to give ſecurity for his good behaviour in a ſum not exceeding thirty dollars, and in default thereof, may be ordered by the Juſtice to leave the ſtate within five days, and if he ſhall refuſe to comply or ſhall return within ſix months, he

may be committed, and if he does not discharge the prison fees within twenty days, may be sold by the Sheriff for a term not exceeding six months.

Negroes and other slaves running into the woods from their masters' service, and destroying cattle, &c. upon refusal to surrender themselves or making resistance against persons legally empowered, may be killed and destroyed.

If any slave is killed in resisting any officer or other person endeavouring to apprehend him such officer or other person is indemnified from any prosecution.

A negro or other slave striking a white person is to have one of his ears cropt.

It is lawful for the Justices of the county Court, to punish slaves convicted of going abroad in the night, or riding horses in the day time without leave, by cropping, branding in the cheek with the letter R. or otherwise, not extending to life or to render them unfit for labour.

Any slave attempting or conspiring to raise an insurrection or to murder any person, or to commit a rape upon a white woman, or to burn any dwelling-house or out-house wherein there are persons or goods, is punished with death without benefit of Clergy, unless the Judges, in their discretion, think proper to substitute labor on the public roads for a period not exceeding fourteen years.

Any negro or other slave, convicted by his own confession or verdict of Jury of pettit treason, murder or arson, is to have his right hand cut off, to be hanged in the usual manner, to have his head severed from his body, the body divided into four quarters, and his head and quarters set up in the most public places of the county.

The full value of an executed slave is adjudged by the Court and paid to the owner.

A negro or molatto, guilty of pilfering or other crime or misdemeanor, cognizable by the county Court, may upon full proof before a Justice of the peace, be ordered to be whipped not exceeding forty lashes.

No negro or other slave is permitted to carry a gun or other offensive weapon from his master's land without licence, and any one offending therein may be whipped.

Abſtracts of the laws of Virginia reſpecting ſlavery.

Free negroes and molattoes are by the conſtitution excluded from the right of ſuffrage, and of conſequence from office too.

All negroes or molattoes, except ſuch as are houſe keepers or reſide upon the frontiers, are prohibited from keeping or carrying any gun, powder, ſhot, club or other weapon, offenſive or defenſive.

Lifting the hand in oppoſition to a white perſon in any caſe, except a wanton aſſault on the negro or molatto, is puniſhable by whipping.

No negro or molatto can be a witneſs in any proſecution or civil ſuit in which a white perſon is a party.

Emancipated negroes may be ſold to pay the debts of their former maſter, contracted before their emancipation, and they may be hired out to ſatisfy their taxes where no ſufficient diſtreſs can be had—their children are to be bound out apprentice by the overſeers of the poor.

Free negroes have all the advantages in capital caſes which white men are entitled to, except a trial by a Jury of their own complection: and a ſlave ſuing for his freedom ſhall have the ſame privilege.

Free negroes reſiding or employed to labour in any town muſt be regiſtered; the ſame thing is required of ſuch as go at large in any county. The penalty in both caſes is a fine upon the perſon employing or harbouring them, and impriſonment of the negro.

The migration of free negroes or molattoes to this ſtate prohibited, and thoſe who do migrate to it, may be ſent back to the place from whence they came.

Any perſon having one-fourth negro blood in him is deemed a molatto.

No diſtinction made between negroes and molattoes, whether ſlaves or freemen.

Importation of ſlaves either by land or water prohibited—ſlaves brought into the ſtate and kept therein one whole year or ſo long at different times as ſhall amount to a year, to be free—every perſon importing ſlaves, ſubject to a fine of two hundred dollars for each ſlave imported—the ſeller or buyer to pay a fine of one hundred dollars.

No perſons to be ſlaves, except ſuch as were ſo on the ſeventeenth of October, 1785, and the deſcendants of the females of them.

Any Juſtice of the peace having notice of the importation of any ſlaves directly or indirectly from any part of Africa or the Weſt-Indies, to cauſe ſuch ſlaves to be apprehended and tranſported out of the commonwealth.

Slaves not to go abroad without leave in writing from their maſters, and if they do, may be whipped—any perſon ſuffering a ſlave to remain on his plantation for four hours together, or dealing with him without leave in writing from his maſter, is ſubject to a fine—a run-away ſlave may be apprehended and committed to jail, and if not claimed within three months (being firſt advertiſed,) he ſhall be hired out, having an iron collar firſt put about his neck—and if not claimed within a year, may be ſold.

Riots, route, unlawful aſſemblies, treſpaſſes and ſeditious ſpeeches by ſlaves, are puniſhable with ſtripes at the diſcretion of a Juſtice of the peace.

The maſter of a ſlave permitting him to go at large and trade as a free man, is ſubject to a fine; and if he ſuffers the ſlave to hire himſelf out, ſuch ſlave may be ſold, and twenty-five per cent. of the price be applied to the uſe of the county.

Slaves not permitted to intermarry with any white perſon, yet no puniſhment is annexed to the offence in the ſlave, nor is the marriage void; but the white perſon contracting the marriage and the Clergyman by whom it is celebrated, are liable to fine and impriſonment.

Slaves not admitted to the benefit of trial by Jury—Juſtices of every county or corporation, conſtituted Juſtices of Oyer and Terminer for the trial of ſlaves charged with treaſon or felony—requires five Juſtices at leaſt to conſtitute a Court, and unanimity in the Court for his condemnation—allowed council to be paid by his owner—may object to the proceedings—thirty days allowed before execution, except in caſes of conſpiracy, inſurrection or rebellion.

To attempt the chaſtity of a white woman forcibly, is puniſhable by diſmemberment.

When any perſon conceives himſelf illegally detained as a ſlave, to make application to a Magiſtrate or to the Court of the diſtrict, county or corporation where he or ſhe may reſide and not elſewhere—petition for freedom to recite material facts, and the Court is to appoint council who ſhall

report his opinion thereon before proceſs ſhall iſſue—penalty on any perſon for adviſing, aiding or aſſiſting a negro in the recovery of his freedom, in caſe he does not ſucceed therein, one hundred dollars, and be farther liable to the maſter in an action for damages.

Widow's dower in ſlaves ſaved to her, although emancipated by the huſband's will, in caſe there is not property ſufficient beſides to amount to one-third part of his eſtate—where part of the ſlaves only are emancipated, the widow's part to be taken out of thoſe not ſet free.

Huſband cannot emancipate his ſlaves by will ſo as to deprive his widow of her dower therein, if his other eſtate be not of value ſufficient to compenſate her for one-third part of the whole eſtate.

Selling of any free perſon for a ſlave, knowing ſuch perſon to be free, puniſhable with death.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE FIFTH

Convention of Delegates

FROM THE

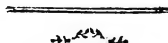
ABOLITION SOCIETIES

Eſtabliſhed in different Parts of the United States,

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE FIRST DAY OF JUNE, ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-EIGHT, AND CONTINUED, BY ADJOURNMENTS, UNTIL THE SIXTH DAY OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.



Philadelphia:

PRINTED BY ZACHARIAH POULSON, JUNIOR,
No. 106, *Cheſnut-ſtreet.*
Nearly oppoſite to the Bank of North America.

1798.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE FIFTH

Convention of Delegates.

June firſt, 1798.

IN conformity to the recommendation of the Convention of laſt year, a number of Repreſentatives from the different Abolition Societies, eſtabliſhed in various parts of the United States, convened this day in the City-hall, in the city of Philadelphia, when, from credentials produced, it appeared that the following perſons were duly appointed delegates, *viz.*

Theodore Foſter,
Thomas Tillinghaſt, } *From Providence.*

Joſeph Bloomfield,
Richard Hartſhorne,
William Cox, junior,
Joſeph Sloane,
Clement Hall, } *From New-Jerſey.*

Benjamin Ruſh,
Caſpar Wiſtar, junior,
William Rawle,
James Todd,
Thomas P. Cope,
Walter Franklin,
James Milnor,
} *From Pennſylvania.*

Tarlton W. Pleaſants,
Joſeph Anthony,
} *From Richmond.*

Of whom the following appeared and took their ſeats, *viz.*

Theodore Foſter,
Thomas Tillinghaſt,
Joſeph Bloomfield,
William Rawle,
Thomas P. Cope,
Walter Franklin,
James Milnor,
Tarlton W. Pleaſants,
James Todd,
Benjamin Ruſh.

The Convention proceeded to the election of a Preſident, when, on counting the ballots, it appeared, that Joſeph Bloomfield was duly elected.

Timothy Paxſon, was appointed Secretary, and Joſeph Fry, Door-keeper.

Communications from Providence, Pennſylvania and Richmond Societies were read, and

Ordered to lie on the table.

A letter dated June 1ſt. 1798, from the Secretary of the Treaſury of the United States, to the Preſident of the Convention, reſpecting the communication addreſſed to him in behalf of the laſt Convention, was read, and

Ordered to lie on the table.

Adjourned till Monday, 5 o'clock, P. M.

June fourth, 1798.

Preſent:

Joſeph Bloomfield,	Tarlton W. Pleaſants,
Theodore Foſter,	Richard Hartſhorne,
Thomas P. Cope,	James Todd,
Walter Franklin,	Benjamin Ruſh,
James Milnor,	Caſpar Wiſtar, junior.

Edward Miller, Valentine Seaman and Samuel Boyd, from the Abolition Society of New-York, and Cæſar A. Rodney from the Abolition Society of Wilmington, attended and produced credentials, from which it appeared, that Samuel Latham Mitchel, Thomas Eddy, Edward Miller, Valentine Seaman and Samuel Boyd were duly appointed delegates from the former, and Cæſar A. Rodney and James A. Bayard, from the latter Society.

Communications from the New-York, New-Jerſey and Alexandria Societies were read, and

Ordered to lie on the table.

From the laſt mentioned communication it appeared, that Samuel Stanſbury was duly appointed a delegate from the Abolition Society of Alexandria.

A communication from William Cox, junior, addreſſed to the Preſident, apologizing for his abſence, was read and deemed ſatisfactory.

On motion,

Reſolved, That Theodore Foſter, Edward Miller, Richard Hartſhorne, James Milnor, Thomas P. Cope, Cæſar A. Rodney and

Tarlton W. Pleaſants, be a committee to take into conſideration the communications from the ſeveral abolition ſocieties, and report the meaſures neceſſary to be adopted in purſuance thereof, as well as ſuch other objects as may to them appear proper for the attention of the Convention.

A letter from the Secretary of State of the United States, addreſſed to the Preſident of the Convention, was read, and

Ordered to lie on the table.

On motion,

Reſolved, That any Member of a Society, eſtabliſhed for the abolition of ſlavery, be permitted to attend the proceedings of this Convention, being introduced by a member thereof.

On motion,

Reſolved, That the letters from the Secretary of State and the Secretary of the Treaſury, be referred to the committee on the communications from the ſeveral ſocieties.

Adjourned till to-morrow 5 o'clock, P. M.

June fifth, 1798.

Preſent:

Joſeph Bloomfield, Preſident.

Theodore Foſter,	Caſpar Wiſtar, junior,
Thomas Tillinghaſt,	James Todd,
Richard Hartſhorne,	Thomas P. Cope,
Edward Miller,	Walter Franklin,

Valentine Seaman,	James Milnor,
Samuel Boyd,	Cæſar A. Rodney,
Benjamin Ruſh,	Tarlton W. Pleaſants.

The committee appointed to take into conſideration, the communications from the ſeveral Abolition Societies, and to ſuggeſt ſuch other objects as might be thought proper to engage the notice of the Convention, made report, which, having been twice read, was, with ſome amendments, adopted, as follows,

The committee to whom were referred, the ſeveral communications made to the Convention, and who were directed to conſider and arrange the objects proper for the attention of the Convention, report,

That they have duly conſidered the reports transmitted to this Convention, from the ſeveral Societies, and are much gratified to obſerve the perſevering attention they exhibit to the objects for which they were originally inſtituted, and particularly to the recommendations of former Conventions. And although the reports received are not ſo numerous as is deſirable, and do not comprehend all the objects recommended; yet the following ſhort review of them will be ſufficient to prove, that a laudable degree of diligence has been exerted by ſeveral ſocieties.

Rhode-Iſland.

In purſuance of the injunctions of the laſt Convention, the Society of Providence have tranſmitted their conſtitution, the number of Members, a liſt of officers, and the exiſting

laws of the ſtate of Rhode-Iſland, concerning ſlavery. They repreſent the condition of the people of color to be eligible, and progreſſively improving; they ſtate their ſucceſs in reſcuing a conſiderable number of perſons from illegal ſervitude, but they have not preſerved any regular reports of trials and adjudications in theſe caſes. Some attention has been paid to the education of people of color, but this object has not been purſued ſo far as could be wiſhed. Occaſional diſcourſes on the ſubject of ſlavery and the ſlave-trade, have been delivered, but no regiſter of manumiſſions has been regularly kept.

New-York.

This Society have made ſucceſsful exertions to emancipate perſons illegally held in bondage. The ſchool for the inſtruction of blacks and other people of color, as well as their children, is ſtill continued in an advantageous manner, and ſeems likely to extend its uſefulneſs much further. They ſtate that a number of benevolent perſons in Queen's county on Long-Iſland have raiſed a fund for the education of children of color in the ſame ſchool with white children, which, they conceive, has produced great benefit to the community. A bill for the gradual abolition of ſlavery, after paſſing the Houſe of Aſſembly, was unfortunately loſt in the Senate; but the diſcuſſion thereby produced is preſumed to have done great ſervice, in diſſipating prejudices and preparing the public mind for a different deciſion on ſome future occaſion. Doubts

concerning the manumiſſion of a particular claſs of people of color, formerly liberated by certain individuals of the ſociety of Friends, are now removed by an act of the Legiſlature for that purpoſe. The ſociety have alſo furniſhed a liſt of their preſent officers, and of the members elected ſince their laſt report.

New-Jerſey.

Since the laſt meeting of the Convention, the Legiſlature of this ſtate have paſſed an act in ſome degree ameliorating the condition of the blacks, and other people of color, a copy of which is annexed to the preſent report of the Society. A liſt of their officers for the preſent year, is included. In the city of Burlington, exertions have been made by public ſpirited individuals to extend the benefit of inſtruction to blacks and other perſons of color, and generally with great ſucceſs, as will more fully appear by recurring to a report to the Society from their ſtanding committee. An emancipating clauſe in the act of the Legiſlature abovementioned was loſt in the Houſe of Aſſembly, only by one voice. No orations on the ſubject of ſlavery have been attempted in this ſtate, being thought unpopular in Eaſt Jerſey, and unneceſſary in Weſt Jerſey.

Pennſylvania.

This Society have tranſmitted a liſt of their officers, and of members elected ſince the laſt convention. They have been unable to procure any reports of adjudged caſes relative to blacks and other people of color, of ſufficient importance to be laid before the Convention.

It is intended to erect a commodious building for a ſchool, if their funds ſhould prove ſufficient.

Virginia.

The Society of Alexandria ſtate that many of their proſecutions for the recovery of the freedom of blacks and other perſons of color, have been favorably terminated, and that conſiderable progreſs has been made in the education of thoſe people, as well as in many other objects of their inſtitution.

The ſociety of Richmond report, that they have ſucceeded in a number of ſuits inſtituted for the relief of perſons illegally detained in ſervitude; and that they contemplate the eſtabliſhment of a ſchool for the inſtruction of blacks and other people of color, but are apprehenſive that their funds will be ſcarcely ſufficient for this purpoſe.

In order to promote the objects of the Convention, the committee conceive it would be proper again to addreſs the ſeveral ſocieties, and to recommend a more punctual attention to the buſineſs of appointing and ſending forward Members to attend the next meeting in this city. From a variety of cauſes, ſeveral matters enjoined by former Conventions remain either partially or totally unexecuted; and thereby many important advantages are ſuſpended or entirely fruſtrated. As a remedy for this delinquency, the committee adviſe a renewal of many former injunctions, and a preſſing requeſt that greater attention be hereafter given to them. The utility ariſing from

the addreſſes of former Conventions to the blacks and other people of color is generally admitted to have been great and extenſive; and as ample room for the operation of this benefit is ſtill preſumed to exiſt, it may be adviſable, to order a republication of one or more of theſe addreſſes, for the purpoſe of again attempting to circulate them as far as poſſible.

The ſituation of public affairs, in the opinion of the committee, renders the preſent time unſuitable for the adoption of any new meaſures of importance. In many of the United States a peculiar degree of caution in the management of this buſineſs becomes neceſſary; and on this ground it is deemed more prudent to perſevere in the ſteps which have already been ſo judiciouſly taken, than to attempt, at this juncture, any material variation or extenſion of them.

The committee do not think it adviſable at preſent to take any further meaſures on the ſubject of the letters heretofore addreſſed by the Convention to the Secretary of State and the Secretary of the Treaſury of the United States.

On behalf of the committee,

THEODORE FOSTER, *Chairman.*

On motion,

Reſolved, That Edward Miller, James Todd and Tarlton W. Pleaſants, be a committee to prepare and report an addreſs to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, conformably to the recommendations of the above report.

Information being received by the Convention, that a number of veſſels are employed by citizens of the United States in the African ſlave-trade;

Ordered, That Walter Franklin, Valentine Seaman and Richard Hartſhorne be a committee to make enquiry on the ſubject and report thereon.

The Convention proceeded to the conſideration of the following paragraph, of the addreſs from the Richmond Society, *viz.*

" There appears to be an extenſive field " open in this ſtate for labor, and the funds " of the Society are too ſmall and inſufficient to accompliſh, in a proper manner, the " purpoſes of their Inſtitution, either for " the relief of numbers of unfortunate peo- " ple, illegally detained in bondage, or in a " more general way to afford ſuitable inſtruc- " tion to the young blacks who have been " liberated: we have, therefore, been indu- " ced to believe, and ſubmit to your conſide- " ration, whether it would not be adviſeable, " under ſuch circumſtances, to make ſome " regulations whereby thoſe Societies, which " are compoſed of numerous members, and " full handed, in places where few ſuffering " caſes may require aſſiſtance, may have it " in their power, in a regular manner, to " help the weak, and contribute, in a more " general and extenſive degree, to the pro- " motion of thoſe important objects; for this " purpoſe we are free to propoſe for your " conſideration, the propriety of recommen-

" ding the raiſing a general fund, to be made " up by the Abolition Societies, and to be " under the direction of the Convention, and " to be applied, from time to time, as they " may ſee cauſe."

A conſiderable portion of time having been occupied in deliberating thereon, the following reſolution was offered, *viz.*

Reſolved, That this Convention are of opinion, that it is inexpedient, to adopt any meaſures on the foregoing ſubject.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The Delegates from the New-York Society preſented to the Convention, for the uſe of the members, thirty copies of a diſcourſe on the ſubject of ſlavery, delivered April 12th. 1797, before ſaid ſociety, by Samuel Miller, one of the members thereof; and the like number of copies of another diſcourſe, on the ſame ſubject, by E. H. Smith, a member of the Society, delivered April 11th. 1798.

Ordered, That two copies of the ſaid diſcourſes be delivered to each of the attending members of the Convention, one to the Secretary, and the remainder to the Preſident of of the Pennſylvania Abolition Society.

Adjourned till to-morrow 5 o'clock, P. M.

June sixth, 1798.

Present:

Joseph Bloomfield, President,

Theodore Foster,	Caspar Wistar, junior,
Thomas Tillinghast,	James Todd,
Richard Hartshorne,	Thomas P. Cope,
Edward Miller,	Walter Franklin,
Valentine Seaman,	James Milnor,
Samuel Boyd,	Cæsar A. Rodney,
Joseph Sloane,	Tarlton W. Pleasants.
Benjamin Rush,	

The resolution yesterday laid on the table, respecting the proposition from the Richmond Society, was again taken up, and adopted.

The committee appointed to enquire respecting the information given at the last meeting, on the subject of a circuitous traffic in slaves, carried on by citizens of the United States, made report, as follows,

The committee appointed to enquire, respecting the information received by the Convention, of a number of vessels employed by citizens of the United States, in the slave trade, beg leave to report,

" That the result of their enquiry has been, " a conviction on their minds, that a trade " of this kind is carried on in the following " manner—Vessels are fitted out with cargoes " for one of the West-India Islands; parts of " which cargoes are there disposed of, and " with the proceeds, slaves are purchased and " carried to other of the West-India Islands

" and ſold. Other veſſels are loaded with rum " for ſome place in Africa, where, we have " ſtrong reaſon to believe, though no official " proof, that ſlaves are purchaſed, tranſported " to the Weſt-Indies, and ſold."

RICHARD HARTSHORNE,
VALENTINE SEAMAN,
WALTER FRANKLIN.

June 6th. 1798.

Whereupon,

Reſolved, That it be recommended to the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States, to make particular enquiry on this ſubject, and report to the enſuing Convention.

In conſequence of information furniſhed by a delegate from the Richmond Society,

Reſolved, As the opinion of this Convention, that it is conſiſtent with good policy, to admit ſlave holders into any of the Societies, where it ſhall appear, that the candidates are really attached to the cauſe of abolition.

The committee appointed to prepare an addreſs to the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States, produced one, which having been twice read, and amended, was adopted as follows, *viz.*

To the Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

THE Convention of delegates from the Abolition Societies eſtabliſhed in different parts of the United States, aſſembled at Phi-

ladelphia, congratulate their conſtituents on the general progreſs of their objects ſince laſt meeting, and on the union of ſentiment, and harmony of deliberation, which has prevailed in all their proceedings.

The aſſembling in Convention, at proper intervals, has produced ſo many advantages in combining the views and operations of the friends of emancipation throughout the United States, that we are perſuaded you will unite with us in opinion, that it is expedient that another Convention of delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies, be held in this city on the firſt Wedneſday of June, in the year one thouſand eight hundred.

The alteration in the period of meeting we have adopted under a conſideration of the peculiar ſituation of our country, and the ſtate of the objects which have hitherto occupied our attention; but, we earneſtly requeſt, that a general repreſentation, and a punctual attendance, may take place at the time recommended.

Although, from the reports of ſuch of the Societies as have ſent delegates to this Convention, we have obſerved, with encouragement and pleaſure, the perſeverance that is uſed, and the progreſs that is made, in the great work for which we have aſſociated; yet, we cannot help noticing, with regret, the abſence of many of our members, and the total omiſſion of ſeveral of the Societies to appoint Repreſentatives, or to comply with the requeſt of the laſt Convention, that, where it was not agreed to ſend delegates, ſuch determination and the cauſe of it might

be reported to the Convention in writing. To thoſe ſocieties, therefore, which have failed in this reſpect, we are induced earneſtly to repeat the requeſt, and to urge their particular attention thereto.

By ſome of the Societies the general requiſitions of former Conventions have not yet been anſwered or complied with, and by others only in part. An accurate table of theſe requiſitions, and the manner, in which each Society had complied with them, was made out by the laſt Convention and forwarded to the different Abolition Societies. By a reference thereto, and to the report of the committee of this Convention, to whom the ſeveral communications were referred, which is included in the copy of our proceedings herewith tranſmitted to you, you will obſerve what yet remains to be done; and we hope you will be able to make complete returns to the ſucceeding Convention, together with ſuch other information as may appear to you to be uſeful towards the important purpoſe of forming a hiſtory of the progreſs and ſtate of ſlavery in the United States.

Too much cannot be ſaid on the neceſſity of a conſtant attention to the ſubject of education. To prepare the minds of our unfortunate African brethren for that condition of freedom and rank in ſociety to which they muſt, ſooner or later, arrive—to diſſeminate among them uſeful inſtruction on moral and religious ſubjects, and to uſe our utmoſt endeavours to have ſchools eſtabliſhed, for the

purpoſe of teaching them to read and write, ought, we conceive, to be the primary object of all the Abolition Societies. We alſo think it of importance, at this particular period, to impreſs upon the minds of thoſe who are in bondage, the propriety of a quiet ſubmiſſion to the injunctions of their maſters, aſſuring them that by ſuch conduct they will be likely to experience not only the advantages of better treatment in their preſent ſituation, but alſo cauſe, perhaps, even their poſſeſſors to perceive the injuſtice that is attached to the principles of ſlavery.

Firmly perſuaded that conſiderable benefit has already reſulted from inculcating friendly advice to this oppreſſed people, and believing that the ſentiments contained in the addreſs of the former Conventions to the free blacks and other people of color in the United States cannot be too frequently repeated and enforced, we recommend to the conſideration of the Societies, the propriety of a republication of thoſe addreſſes by each ſociety, and ſuch communication and diſtribution thereof as may be beſt calculated to promote a beneficial effect.

The Convention having been informed, that veſſels are fitted out with cargoes for certain of the Weſt India Iſlands, parts of which cargoes are their diſpoſed of, and, with the proceeds, ſlaves are purchaſed and carried to other of the ſaid Iſlands, and ſold; alſo that other veſſels are loaded with rum, for certain ports in Africa, with the proceeds of which, we have reaſon to believe, the natives are

purchaſed and afterwards conveyed and ſold as ſlaves in the Weſt Indies. We recommend a ſtrict enquiry to be made into the conduct of perſons thus offending againſt the dictates of humanity and the honor and intereſt of our country, that proper meaſures, to puniſh and prevent ſuch nefarious and diſgraceful practices, may be adopted.

We have thought it expedient to confine our attention, at preſent, principally to carrying into effect the meaſures heretofore adviſed. Let us, however, whilſt prudent and cautious, continue to be firm and ſincere. Let us embrace every opportunity which may offer for ameliorating the condition of ſlaves ſo far as the laws, under which we ſeverally act, will permit us to proceed. Let us do nothing which may juſtly draw forth the cenſure of our country, but act, in all things, with that moderation and propriety which have heretofore diſtinguiſhed the Abolition Societies.

We confidently truſt, that when the ſtorms, by which the world is at preſent agitated, ſhall have ſubſided, the light of truth will break through the dark gloom of oppreſſion—cruelty and injuſtice will not only hear, but obey, the voice of reaſon and religion; and in theſe United States the practice of the people will be conformable to their declaration—"That all men are born equally free, and have an unalienable right to Liberty."

Reſolved, That one thouſand five hundred copies of the proceedings of this Convention be printed and diſtributed among the ſeveral Abolition Societies; and that James Todd, Walter Franklin, James Milnor and Thomas P. Cope, be a committee to ſuperintend the publication and diſtribution thereof.

Reſolved, That the Preſident and Secretary atteſt, with their ſignatures, copies of the addreſs of this Convention, and that one copy be tranſmitted, by the laſt named committee, to each Abolition Society.

Reſolved, That the ſame Committee have the minutes of this Convention fairly copied in the book provided for that purpoſe; and that they give three months notice, to each of the Societies, of the meeting of the next Convention.

Reſolved, That the thanks of this Convention be preſented, by the ſame committee, to the Preſident of the Common Council for the uſe of their chamber.

Adjourned, *ſine die.*

Publiſhed by order of the Convention,

TIMOTHY PAXSON *Secretary.*

Philadelphia, ~~May 9th.~~ 1797.

James

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE SIXTH

Convention of Delegates

FROM THE

ABOLITION SOCIETIES

Eſtabliſhed in different Parts of the United States,

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE FOURTH DAY OF JUNE, ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED, AND CONTINUED BY ADJOURNMENTS, UNTIL THE SIXTH DAY OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.

Philadelphia:

PRINTED BY ZACHARIAH POULSON, JUNIOR,

No. 106, *Cheſnut-ſtreet.*

1800.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE FIFTH

Convention of Delegates.

Philadelphia,
June 4th. 1800, 10 *o'clock*, A. M.

SEVERAL delegates from Abolition Societies, eſtabliſhed in various parts of the United States, aſſembled this day in the City Hall, in purſuance of the recommendation of the Convention of 1798, when, from the credentials produced, it appeared that the following perſons were appointed to repreſent their reſpective Societies:—

New-Jerſey.
- Joſeph Bloomfield,
- Clement Hall,
- Franklin Davenport,
- William Parrot,
- Robert Smith, junior.

Pennſylvania,
- Thomas P. Cope,
- James Milnor,
- Thomas Parker,
- Thomas Harriſon,
- Timothy Paxſon,
- Samuel Bettle,
- George Williams.

Richmond, { Micajah Davis, Joseph Anthony, John Ellis, Tarlton W. Pleasants;

Of whom the following were present:

Joseph Bloomfield, Clement Hall, Robert Smith, junior, Thomas P. Cope, James Milnor, Thomas Harrison, Timothy Paxson, George Williams, Micajah Davis.

The Convention proceeded to the choice of a President,—when, on counting the votes, it appeared that Joseph Bloomfield was elected.

John R. Coates, a member of the Pennsylvania Society, was appointed Secretary, and John Rafield Door-keeper.

The following addresses from the Pennsylvania and Richmond Societies, were read, and ordered to lie on the table.

To the CONVENTION *of* DELEGATES *from the different Abolition Societies in the United States, proposed to be held in the city of Philadelphia, on the fourth day of the Sixth-month* 1800.

AFTER a lapse of two years, it is with great satisfaction we see the period approaching, when the sixth Convention are to assemble. Still impressed with the same forcible reasons in favor of these associations, which have heretofore governed us, we cheerfully contribute our co-operation towards their continuance. In this instance we have appointed, Thomas P. Cope, James Milnor, Thomas Parker, Thomas Harrison, Timothy Paxson, Samuel Bettle and George Williams, our Delegates.

In the addreſſes which we have already tranſmitted to the ſeveral former Conventions, the ſtate of the different objects recommended to our attention are ſo minutely detailed, that we do not think it neceſſary to trouble you with a recapitulation of all that has been done on our part.

It will be proper to note ſuch additional particulars, as we deem ſufficiently important to communicate.

We accompany the preſent addreſs, with the names and places of reſidence, of ſuch perſons as have been admitted members of our inſtitution, ſince the date of our laſt communication, and of the officers thereof for the current year.

In our laſt addreſs we mentioned that we had commenced our exertions for obtaining the laws reſpecting ſlavery, from the ſtates ſouthward of this, in which no Abolition Societies are eſtabliſhed, and that they had been obſtructed by difficulties which we were not then able to ſurmount. Thoſe difficulties ſtill exiſt. A committee who have had the matter under care, for the paſt year, have not been able to obtain any of theſe documents, and from their report it appears that the proſpect is very diſcouraging.

Enquiry has been made reſpecting the illegal and circuitous trade in ſlaves, between this country and Africa, and it appears that ſuch a traffic is extenſively carried on. Veſſels clear out for the Weſt Indies, where they diſpoſe of their out cargoes and proceed to Africa for ſlaves, whom they ſell in the Weſt Indies upon their return. Altho' this practice is notorious, the offenders eſcape with impunity, and we fear that this is owing, in a great meaſure, to defects in the exiſting law upon the ſubject; which appears only to contemplate the caſe

of an actual *fitting out*, expreſsly for the purpoſe of carrying on the ſlave trade. If this conſtruction be true, we ſubmit it to your judgment to determine, how far an application from your Body to Congreſs, for a reviſion and amendment of the law, may be expedient and uſeful.

With regard to the property of the free, and the employment and moral conduct of all the blacks within our ſtate, we cannot add any thing very material to what we have heretofore communicated.

In the property of the free, we believe there is no great variation from what was exhibited in a ſtatement thereof tranſmitted to a former Convention. Some who then had houſes in the city and ſuburbs, have been obliged to part with them to pay the ground rents, while others have, by induſtry and economy, been enabled to procure houſes. We know but little as to the property poſſeſſed by blacks in other parts of the ſtate, but a good account of their moral conduct has been received from ſome places in the country.

The employment of the free blacks in the city is various. Some are mechanics, more are waiters, a ſtill larger number are ſeamen; but the great body of them are day labourers; the ſlaves are generally waiters.

The moral conduct of many of theſe ſeveral deſcriptions of people, merits approbation; that of a number is exemplary; but we lament that too many, notwithſtanding great labour has been made uſe of, to convince them of the evil tendency of their conduct, ſpend much of their time and money in frolic and intemperance.

The great conſolation however which we find amidſt the regrets occaſioned by this unfortunate depravation of morals, is in the hope of better

things from the rising generation. If we are but successful in infusing sound principles into the minds of the young, and in suitably forming their early habits, we trust that the future exemplariness of their lives will awaken those who are older, to an appreciation of the importance of religion, and the beauty and excellence of a moral deportment through life.

Under this impression, we have continued an unremitted attention to the subject of education.

Since our last address, Absalom Jones, Minister of the African church in this city, commenced a school for young blacks, in aid of which, for one year, we granted him one hundred dollars.

Another black man has also opened a school in the Northern Liberties, at which a few scholars have been taught at the expense of the Society. It is believed however, that our present school establishments may be advantageously varied, and in consequence several material alterations are in contemplation. As exertions also are now making for an increase of the fund for educating black children, we shall probably ere long be better enabled than at present, to be useful in this prime object of our institution.

Amongst the various duties which have occupied the several committees of our society during the past year, we feel great satisfaction in mentioning those of our committee of employ, who have been eminently useful in finding employment for a large number of blacks; answering by this means, the call of humanity, preserving the spirit of industry, and contributing to prevent the fatal effects of habits of idleness.

The question respecting the constitutional existence of slavery in this state, has not yet received a judicial determination.

We mentioned in our laſt addreſs, that a bill for the entire abolition of ſlavery was then before our State Legiſlature. The buſineſs has been procraſtinated until the laſt ſeſſion, when a bill on this important ſubject paſſed the Houſe of Repreſentatives, but the ſeſſion ſoon after cloſing, it was not taken up by the Senate.

We tranſmit you a copy of this bill, and without obſerving, in detail, on its proviſions; we cannot but expreſs our diſapprobation of many of them. Proceeding as we do on a great principle of natural right, we regret that a legiſlative recognition of it, ſhould be accompanied with reſtrictions inconſiſtent with its full enjoyment; and that it ſhould be conceived neceſſary to increaſe the exiſting prejudices againſt an oppreſſed claſs of our Fellow-men, by burdenſome and ſevere diſcriminations.

We propoſe to give attention to the progreſs of this buſineſs at the next ſeſſion of the Legiſlature, and in the mean time we will hope, that ſuch amendments may be made to this bill, as ſhall meet the general approbation of our fellow citizens, and more effectually benefit the unfortunate beings whoſe welfare is the object of our anxious ſolicitude and care.

Signed by direction, and in behalf, of the Pennſylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c. &c.

JAMES PEMBERTON, *Preſident.*

Philadelphia, Fourth-month, 7th. 1800.

Atteſt.

TIMOTHY PAXSON,
JAMES MILNOR, } *Secretaries.*

To the next General Convention of Delegates, from the ſeveral Abolition Societies to be held in Philadelphia.

Respected Friends,

WE have received, and read with ſatisfaction, the addreſs to us, from the Convention of 1798, congratulating us on the general progreſs of their objects ſince laſt meeting; the union of ſentiment and harmony of deliberation which has prevailed in their proceedings, together with the advantages it hath produced in combining the views and operations of the friends of emancipation throughout the United States, is encouragement to us, to appoint delegates to attend the enſuing Convention, to repreſent us therein.

We agree with you, that too much cannot be ſaid on the neceſſity of a conſtant attention to the ſubject of education, to prepare the minds of our unfortunate African brethren for that condition of freedom and rank in ſociety, to which, we believe, they will ſooner or later arrive. This is indeed a ſubject of great weight and has engaged our attention ſo far, as to appoint a committee to conſider of the ways and means moſt likely to enable us to proceed in ſo deſirable a work; but as yet we can hardly ſay, we have done more than make the firſt ſtep.

We were for a conſiderable time engaged in the proſecution of ſundry ſuits in the General Court, and at length obtained judgments for the freedom of thirteen perſons; but previous to obtaining the ſaid judgments, they were carried away by their holders into South Carolina and Georgia, and we were informed, that they and their deſcendants and connections in the ſame ſituation, amount to about

forty or fifty perſons. In the Tenth-month (October) laſt we appointed a committee to enquire after them, with a view to afford ſuch relief as the confined ſtate of our reſources would allow. Two other ſuits in Patenburg Diſtrict Court, are determined, by which ſeven perſons have recovered their freedom, and one ſuit in the Richmond Diſtrict Court, which the Society had inſtituted for the recovery of a family, (ſaid to be of Indian deſcent) conſiſting of about twenty-four perſons, was determined againſt us. We have alſo under notice ſuits, ſome inſtituted by the parties themſelves, (whom we have undertaken to befriend,) and others by order of the ſociety, for about one hundred perſons who appear to be unlawfully detained in bondage; theſe ſuits we cannot proſecute with as much vigor, as we would wiſh, for want of ſufficient funds: nevertheleſs it is our intention to keep them in view, and proceed therein as we may be able, for notwithſtanding our Conſtitution has been amended, and the requiſitions on the members doubled, and ſome new ones added, yet we find that the weight of buſineſs claiming our attention with that already engaged in, is more than we can well accompliſh, independent of extending our views to that deſirable object of ſchool education; and ſo fully affording our aid in many caſes as would be neceſſary in the promotion of the cauſe of humanity.

We fully unite with you, in your care and attention in ſuppreſſing the iniquitious practice of trafficking in our fellow men, particularly in wreſting them from their native land (and thereby tearing them from all their near and tender ties of nature,) as well as a violation of the laws of our country; we truſt all ſuch caſes that may come to our knowledge will be attended to.

We herewith preſent you with a copy of our reviſed Conſtitution, and appoint Micajah Davis, Joſeph Anthony, John Ellis and Tarlton W. Pleaſants or either of them, to repreſent this ſociety in General Convention.

Signed by direction, and on behalf, of the Virginia Abolition Society, at their half yearly meeting, held in the city of Richmond, by adjournment, on the 18th. day of the Fourth-month, (April) 1800.

M. DAVIS, *Preſident* pro.tem.

Atteſt

JOSEPH ANTHONY, *Secretary.*

Reſolved, That the addreſſes from the ſeveral Societies be inſerted at large on the minutes.

In order to give time for other Repreſentatives to make their appearance before the Convention proceed to further buſineſs, it was agreed to adjourn till 6 o'clock in the afternoon, to which time the Convention accordingly adjourned.

June fourth,—6 *o'clock*, P. M.

The Convention met,

Present:

Joſeph Bloomfield, Preſident,

Clement Hall,	Timothy Paxſon,
Robert Smith, junior,	George Williams,
William Parrot,	Micajah Davis,
Thomas P. Cope,	James Milnor.

The following perſons were appointed to report on the objects proper for the attention of this Convention: Micajah Davis, Clement Hall, and George Williams.

Adjourned till to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

June fifth, 1800.

The Convention met.

Present:

Joſeph Bloomfield, Preſident,

Clement Hall,	Thomas Parker,
William Parrot,	Thomas Harriſon,
Robert Smith, junior,	Timothy Paxſon,
Thomas P. Cope,	George Williams,
James Milnor,	Micajah Davis,

John Brown, a Delegate from the New-York Society, produced his credentials, and took his ſeat.

The following communication was received from the New-York Manumiſſion Society, *viz.*

To the CONVENTION *of* DELEGATES *from the different States in the American Confederacy, which contain Societies for abolishing the practice of African slavery. The Society established in New-York, "for promoting the manumission of slaves, and "protecting such of them as have been or may be "liberated," respectfully submits the following Report on the present condition of their Institution.*

THE condition of negroes at that time in New-York, relative to their morals, property and employment was reported on to the Convention very fully in 1797, since which, no material change has taken place in these particulars, excepting that the Society flatter themselves a gradual and progressive improvement continues to be made.

The instruction of African and other people of color, is still regarded as a leading object of this Society's care. The school consists at this time of about one hundred children: the male teacher who was formerly usher in this seminary, is himself a man of color, and executes commendably the trust reposed in him; it is very gratifying to observe the good conduct of those who have received an education here, the manners and deportment of such, being greatly improved beyond those of their color who have not enjoyed similar advantages. This article as well as the preceding, was on the occasion before mentioned and referred to, so fully discussed, that it seems the less necessary to go into particulars at present, which would be in several respects, a repetition of what has heretofore been reported.

It is however deemed proper to revive the consideration of a plan, which has been adopted in Queen's county on Long Island, by a number of benevolent persons, for the instruction of people

of color, as the mode may perhaps be worthy of imitation in other places. They have eſtabliſhed a fund which is let at intereſt, with the income of this, they pay for the tuition of as many children as they can; there is a great convenience in this method, for in many places, eſpecially in the country, where it is impoſſible to eſtabliſh a ſchool entirely of blacks and other perſons of color, it is found practicable with the annual profits of this capital, to pay for the tuition of a number of children in different parts of the country, and to procure admiſſion for them into the ſchools for common inſtruction, where white children are taught; by this means a conſiderable number of this hitherto neglected and deſpiſed race, are reſcued from ignorance, and from its almoſt inſeparable companion, VICE.

It will doubtleſs be agreeable to the Convention to learn, that this Society ſtill holds a convenient parcel of unencumbered real eſtate, eſtimated to be worth four thouſand dollars, conſiſting of three lots of ground, on one of which is a building erected for the accommodation of the ſchool.—And the Convention will learn with equal ſatisfaction, that the Corporation of the city of New-York have granted toward the ſupport of the ſchool, for the preſent year, the ſum of five hundred and ſeventeen dollars, the account of this donation was accompanied with an intimation of its being highly probable that an equal ſum, or more would be appropriated annually for the ſame purpoſe. This money is the product of a capital paid from the public treaſury annually to the cities and towns in the ſtate for the better ſupport of ſchools. It ſeems that the Corporation of our city have been enabled to veſt nearly thirty thouſand dollars of their proportion of this yearly allowance from the Treaſury

in public ſtock. In diſtributing the ſum which is received to the different ſchools throughout the city, the African ſchool has been judged worthy of a dividend equal to the before mentioned amount.

With reſpect to the addreſs of a former Convention to the people of color, pains have been taken to diſtribute the printed copies of the ſame, to impreſs the ſentiments it contains, and to make them operative and uſeful; a conſiderable number yet remain on hand, the proper diſpoſal of which will continue to be an object of the Society's care. A regiſter of deeds of manumiſſion is kept by this Society.

Since the report made to the Convention in 1798, this Society has been ſucceſsful in its efforts to afford relief to a number of perſons held in bondage; there have been ſince that time ſeventy-four applications for aſſiſtance, of theſe eighteen have terminated in the liberation of the oppreſſed, chiefly under the law prohibiting importation. Seven others are now in ſuit, ſome of which are under the clauſe of the ſtatute prohibiting importation, others where the perſons held as ſlaves are not of African deſcent, but the offſpring of the native Indians of America, and one as having ſerved in the army of the United States, during the late revolutionary war. The caſes of forty more are under conſideration by the Standing Committee: Their ſubjects of complaint are various, ſome as having been brought into this ſtate and ſold; ſeveral as deſcendants of the Aborigines; a few under the ſtatute of limitation; and a number as having belonged to perſons whoſe eſtates were heretofore confiſcated: Nine of the applications have been diſmiſſed for want of ſufficient proof; and in addition to theſe, ſome of the Society have been individually ſucceſsful in obtaining the liberation of a number of perſons by their perſonal interference.

A diſcovery has lately been made of a circuitous traffic in ſlaves carried on unlawfully within the juriſdiction of the ſtate of New-York; the method purſued by the perſons who conduct this nefarious and abominable trade we are informed is, to carry them from this, to one of the ſouthern ſtates and from a convenient port there, as Norfolk or Savannah, to re-ſhip them for the Weſt India market. It ſeems this practice has become frequent, and has been followed a conſiderable time without detection. On the 18th. of April, the Standing Committee was informed that ſeveral blacks were confined on board of a veſſel lying in the ſtream, belonging to a Frenchman: meaſures were taken immediately to detain her, but before the neceſſary ſteps could be taken, ſhe was got under ſail and put to ſea without a clearance. On the 23d. information was received that another veſſel was lading with negroes, who were in general very ſecretly conveyed to the ſhore in carriages, and taken on board; one of the Magiſtrates accompanied by the Chairman of the Standing Committee, and ſeveral others, went on board this veſſel and found four blacks confined in the hold, there they learned from the maſter and crew, that the owners were Frenchmen, that their intention was to ſhip a conſiderable number of blacks, that thoſe found on board were a part of the cargo, and that the whole buſineſs was conducted with all poſſible ſecrecy on account of its being a violation of the law of the ſtate: For the puniſhment of the perſons concerned in theſe vile proceedings, it has been judged proper to commence ſuits againſt the owners, under the ſtatute for recovery of the penalty therein expreſſed, and for liberating the ſlaves ſo intended to be exported, and to proſecute criminally one of the owners and another perſon, a citizen of this ſtate for kidnapping a *Free Boy* diſcovered among the negroes confined on board the ſaid veſſel.

The Society alſo forward to the Convention a copy of a public act of the Legiſlature of New-York, which provides for the gradual abolition of ſlavery in this populous and extenſive ſtate.

We cannot perhaps terminate our report more properly, than by a reflection on the means which, under Divine permiſſion, have appeared to be thus far uſeful, in freeing the oppreſſed, and enlightening the minds of the ignorant; and by congratulating you on the proſpect of our living in a community in which, within a time, not far diſtant, nor difficult to eſtimate—Domeſtic Slavery will be unknown, and where the bleſſings of civil and religious liberty will be equally extended to all.

New-York, May 20th. 1800.

WILLIAM W. WOOLSEY,
Firſt Vice Preſident.

VALENTINE SEAMAN, *Secretary.*

The Committee appointed to report upon the objects proper for the attention of this Convention, produced the following, *viz.*

THE committee appointed to arrange the buſineſs proper to be entered upon by the Convention, beg leave to Report,——

That, in their opinion, it will be expedient to appoint committees for the following purpoſes—

A committee to prepare a circular addreſs to the different Abolition Societies in the United States, ſetting forth the utility of meeting in Convention, and thus uniting their efforts, not only for the extermination of ſlavery and the ſlave trade, but alſo for the illumination of the underſtanding and improvement of the religious and moral conduct of the unhappy deſcendants of Africa.

Alſo, a committee to review the addreſſes to the free blacks, &c. heretofore iſſued by the Convention, and to re-inculcate, in a varied form, the ſentiments of rectitude and affectionate well-wiſhing therein contained, with ſuch other matter as may appear to them ſuitable; the committee believing ſuch a ſtep to be neceſſary, not only on account of the blacks, but alſo to ſhew to the citizens of the United States and to the world, that the Friends of perſonal freedom are perſuaded the ſuperſtructure of happineſs cannot be erected unleſs founded on the baſis of religion and virtue.

The committee further propoſe, that, in the contemplated addreſs to the different ſocieties, a recommendation ſhould be inſerted, exciting them to contribute funds to be appropriated under the direction of the next Convention, towards the aſſiſtance of ſuch of the Abolition Societies as have much buſineſs to engage their attention, and are but weak in pecuniary reſources, or to ſuch other objects as the next Convention may think adviſable.

By order of the Committee,

M. DAVIS, *Chairman.*

Robert Smith, junior, Thomas P. Cope, John Brown, and Micajah Davis were appointed a committee to prepare an addreſs to the different Societies.

William Parrot, Timothy Paxſon, and James Milnor were appointed a committee to prepare an addreſs to the free blacks.

Reſolved, That the committee appointed to frame the addreſs to the different Abolition Societies, be directed to inſert a requeſt, that they would take into conſideration the propriety of giving to the next Convention, authority to form a Conſti-

tution, and adopt such measures as may be calculated to give permanence to the Convention, and that they express their opinions respectively on this subject to the said next Convention.

Adjourned till ten o'clock to-morrow.

June 6th. 1800.

The Convention met.

Present:

Joseph Bloomfield, President,

Clement Hall,	Thomas Harrison,
William Parret,	Timothy Paxson,
Robert Smith, junior,	George Williams,
Thomas P. Cope,	Micajah Davis,
James Milnor,	John Brown.
Thomas Parker,	

The committee appointed to review the addresses to the free blacks, heretofore issued by former Conventions, made the following report, the consideration of which, after some debate, was postponed.

The committee appointed to review the addresses to the free blacks, heretofore issued by former Conventions, &c.

REPORT,

That, from a careful examination of the addresses of former Conventions to the free blacks and other people of color, they are induced to believe, that the address of the Convention of ninety-six, contains the most valuable instruction, and that they cannot improve it by any addition or modification.

They, therefore, propose that the following recommendation, be inserted in the address of this Convention to the several Abolition Societies, *viz.*

That we are fully perſuaded that conſiderable advantages have reſulted heretofore, from addreſſing the free blacks and other people of color, and therefore that thoſe benefits may ſtill be continued to them, we are induced earneſtly to recommend the republication and diſtribution of the very excellent addreſs of the Convention of 1796; that they be convened together as often as may be convenient, to revive, in their remembrance, the ſubſtance of ſaid addreſs, and that ſuch counſel and advice be, from time to time, added, as may tend to their religious and moral improvement.

By order of the Committee,

WILLIAM PARRET, *Chairman.*

The committee appointed to prepare a circular addreſs to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, preſented the following, which was twice read, conſidered by paragraph, and unanimouſly adopted:—

To *Society, &c.*

THE Convention of delegates, from the different Abolition Societies eſtabliſhed in the United States, feel a pleaſure in informing you, that their deliberations have been conducted with much harmony and ſatisfaction to themſelves.

They, however, deeply regret, that ſo few of the Societies have been induced to ſend Repreſentatives to the Convention.

The great and good work of reſtoring liberty to the captive, and fitting him to fill that ſtation in the ſcale of being, from which he has been forced by the domineering ſpirit of power and uſurpation, may be conſidered as little more than begun. How many thouſands of miſerable wretches yet languiſh in ſlavery, in theſe United States, to whom

the light of morn, which ſhould awaken all nature alike to harmony and joy, affords, perhaps, no other conſolation ſave the ſolitary certainty, that one day more is taken from the long period of their ſufferings.—This is not all—In vain do you liberate the African, while you neglect to furniſh him with the means of properly providing for himſelf, and of becoming an uſeful member of the community. This ſubject alone opens an extenſive field for active benevolence, and juſtly demands the exerciſe of a large portion of the talents and labours of the friends of emancipation.

To effect theſe deſirable objects, ſo importunately called for by every ſentiment of a feeling heart, union and concentration of energy appear to be indiſpenſible. The ſocieties ſhould never be found in the purſuit of incongruous meaſures, but act in concert; and this cannot, perhaps, be better accompliſhed than by a free and liberal interchange of opinions, and knowledge, and experience. The convention ſhould be the rallying point of information, whence uſeful knowledge ſhould diverge to each ſociety, communicating life, energy, and conſiſtency to the whole.

The advantages reſulting from this inſtitution may be known by paſt experience; but as an additional inſtance of the good effects flowing from it, we refer you to the addreſſes forwarded this year to the Convention, and printed in the minutes; in which you will perceive, and eſpecially in the one from New-York, much valuable matter. That ſociety mentions a ſpecies of kidnapping, which to the diſgrace of humanity, has been carried on in that city in a manner at once evincing the barefaced hardineſs of its perpetrators, and the wicked and cunning arts practiced, by the enemies of freedom, on an oppreſſed people. There is

good reaſon to believe, that ſimilar practices are ſecretly purſued in other parts of the Union. We therefore earneſtly preſs your vigilant attention to the ſubject, in order that if any other perſons ſhould be engaged in this nefarious trafic, they may be made to ſuffer that expoſure and puniſhment which the enormity of the crime ſo richly merits.

Fully impreſſed with the magnitude of the object, and the benefits to be derived from it, we cannot forbear ſtrongly to recommend, that another Convention be held in this city on the firſt Wedneſday in June, in the year 1801. And, in order to inſure permanency, and its conſequent advantages to this eſtabliſhment, we ſubmit to your conſideration, the expediency of delegating to your Repreſentatives, the power of aiding in the formation of a Conſtitution, for the government of future Conventions.

The caſe mentioned by the Virginia ſociety, held at Richmond, from which it ſeems evident that a ſmall ſum of money, beyond what their funds are calculated to bear, might reſtore a conſiderable number of perſons to liberty, who were unlawfully taken from their ſtate into Georgia, and there ſold as ſlaves, has called forth the ſympathy of this Convention; and forcibly ſuggeſts the propriety of enabling the next Convention, by the voluntary contributions of the different ſocieties, to grant ſome pecuniary aid to ſimilar and other proper objects. Much good might be done in this way; and perhaps ſome ſocieties, who are capable, may be found willing promptly to beſtow a portion of their funds to the Virginia ſociety, to enable them more effectually to proſecute this particular claim, It is alſo to be preſumed, that ſome of the Societies. eſpecially in the eaſtern ſtates, where ſlavery no

longer exiſts, might render their benevolent exertions more extenſively uſeful, by ſuitable and timely grants to others, who are leſs wealthy, and have much to do.

You have embarked in an excellent cauſe—go on and proſper,—until liberty, like the light of Heaven, or the air we breathe, ſhall, however men may be diverſified by color, ſhape or habit, become the equal inheritance of all.

By order of the Committee,

THOMAS P. COPE, *Chairman.*

Reſolved, That eight hundred copies of the minutes of this Convention, be printed and diſtributed among the ſeveral Societies; that James Milnor, Thomas P. Cope, and Timothy Paxſon be a committee to ſuperintend the publication and diſtribution thereof; that they alſo tranſmit one copy of the addreſs of the Convention to each Society; give at leaſt three months notice of the meeting of the next Convention; and, if practicable, procure correct copies of the acts of Congreſs, relative to the ſlave trade, and have them publiſhed with the minutes; and that they alſo make an abtract of ſuch laws, on the ſubject of ſlavery, as have been paſſed in any of the ſtates, ſince the publication of the former abſtract, or ſuch of them as can be obtained.

ADJOURNED, *ſine die.*

APPENDIX.

An act to prohibit the carrying on the Slave-trade, from the United States to any foreign place or country.

Section I. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled*, That no citizen or citizens of the United States, or foreigner, or any other person coming into, or residing within the same, shall, for himself or any other person whatsoever, either as master, factor or owner, build, fit, equip, load or otherwise prepare any ship or vessel, within any port or place of the said United States, nor shall cause any ship or vessel to sail from any port or place within the same, for the purpose of carrying on any trade or traffic in slaves, to any foreign country; or for the purpose of procuring, from any foreign kingdom, place or country, the inhabitants of such kingdom, place or country, to be transported to any foreign country, port or place whatever, to be sold or disposed of, as slaves: And if any ship or vessel shall be so fitted out, as aforesaid, for the said purposes, or shall be caused to sail, so as aforesaid, every such ship or vessel, her tackle, furniture, apparel and other appurtenances, shall be forfeited to the United States; and shall be liable to be seized, prosecuted and condemned, in any of the circuit courts or district court for the district, where the said ship or vessel may be found and seized.

Section II. *And be it further enacted*, That all and every person, so building, fitting out, equipping, loading, or otherwise preparing, or sending away, any ship or vessel, knowing, or intending,

that the ſame ſhall be employed in ſuch trade or buſineſs, contrary to the true intent and meaning of this act, or any ways aiding or abetting therein, ſhall ſeverally forfeit and pay the ſum of two thouſand dollars, one moiety thereof, to the uſe of the United States, and the other moiety thereof, to the uſe of him or her, who ſhall ſue for and proſecute the ſame.

Section III. *And be it further enacted*, That the owner, maſter or factor of each and every foreign ſhip or veſſel, clearing out for any of the coaſts or kingdoms of Africa, or ſuſpected to be intended for the Slave-trade, and the ſuſpicion being declared to the officer of the cuſtoms, by any citizen, on oath or affirmation, and ſuch information being to the ſatisfaction of the ſaid officer, ſhall firſt give bond with ſufficient ſureties, to the Treaſurer of the United States, that none of the natives of Africa, or any other foreign country or place, ſhall be taken on board the ſaid ſhip or veſſel, to be tranſported, or ſold as ſlaves, in any other foreign port or place whatever, within nine months thereafter.

Section IV. *And be it further enacted*, That if any citizen or citizens of the United States ſhall, contrary to the true intent and meaning of this act, take on board, receive or tranſport any ſuch perſons, as above deſcribed, in this act, for the purpoſe of ſelling them as ſlaves, as aforeſaid, he or they ſhall forfeit and pay, for each and every perſon, ſo received on board, tranſported, or ſold as aforeſaid, the ſum of two hundred dollars, to be recovered in any court of the United States, proper to try the ſame, the one moiety thereof, to the uſe of the United States, and the other moiety to

the uſe of ſuch perſon or perſons, who ſhall ſue for and proſecute the ſame.

FREDERICK AUGUSTUS MUHLENBERG,
Speaker of the Houſe of Repreſentatives.

JOHN ADAMS, *Vice Preſident of the United States, and Preſident of the Senate.*

APPROVED—March the twenty ſecond, 1794

G°. WASHINGTON,
Preſident of the United States.

An Act in addition to the act, entitled, "An act to prohibit the carrying on the Slave-trade from the United States to any foreign place or country."

Section I. *BE it enacted by the Senate and Houſe of Repreſentatives of the United States of America, in Congreſs aſſembled*, That it ſhall be unlawful for any citizen of the United States, or other perſon reſiding within the United States, directly or indirectly to hold or have any right or property in any veſſel employed or made uſe of in the tranſportation or carrying of ſlaves from one foreign country or place to another, and any right or property belonging as aforeſaid, ſhall be forfeited, and may be libelled and condemned for the uſe of the perſon who ſhall ſue for the ſame—and ſuch perſon tranſgreſſing the prohibition aforeſaid, ſhall alſo forfeit and pay a ſum of money equal to double the value of the right or property in ſuch veſſel which he held as aforeſaid, and ſhall alſo forfeit a ſum of money equal to double the value of the intereſt which he may have had in the ſlaves which at any time may have been tranſported or carried in ſuch veſſel after the paſſing of this act, and againſt the form thereof.

Section II. *And be it further enacted*, That it ſhall be unlawful for any citizen of the United States or other perſon reſiding therein, to ſerve on board any veſſel of the United States employed or made uſe of in the tranſportation or carrying of ſlaves from one foreign country or place to another, and any ſuch citizen or other perſon voluntarily ſerving as aforeſaid ſhall be liable to be indicted therefor, and on conviction thereof, ſhall be liable to a fine not exceeding two thouſand dollars, and be impriſoned not exceeding two years.

Section III. *And be it further enacted*, That if any citizen of the United States ſhall voluntarily ſerve on board of any foreign ſhip or veſſel which ſhall hereafter be employed in the Slave-trade, he ſhall, on conviction thereof, be liable to, and ſuffer the like forfeitures, pains, diſabilities and penalties as he would have incurred had ſuch ſhip or veſſel been owned or employed in whole or in part by any perſon or perſons reſiding within the United States.

Section IV. *And be it further enacted*, That it ſhall be lawful for any of the commiſſioned veſſels of the United States, to ſeize and take any veſſel employed in carrying on trade, buſineſs or traffic contrary to the true intent and meaning of this or the ſaid act to which this is in addition, and ſuch veſſel, together with her tackle, apparel and guns, and the goods or effects other than ſlaves which ſhall be found on board, ſhall be forfeited and may be proceeded againſt in any of the Diſtrict or Circuit Courts, and ſhall be condemned for the uſe of the officers and crew of the veſſel making the ſeizure, and be divided in the proportion directed in the caſe of prize; and all perſons intereſted in ſuch veſſel, or in the enterprize or voyage in which ſuch veſſel ſhall be employed at the time of ſuch cap-

ture, shall be precluded from all right or claim to the slaves found on board such vessel as aforesaid, and from all damages or retribution on account thereof, and it shall moreover be the duty of the commanders of such commissioned vessels to apprehend and take into custody every person found on board of such vessel so seized and taken, being of the officers or crew thereof, and him or them convey as soon as conveniently may be, to the civil authority of the United States in some one of the Districts thereof, to be proceeded against in due course of law.

Section V. *And be it further enacted*, That the District and Circuit Courts of the United States shall have cognizance of all acts and offences against the prohibitions herein contained.

Section VI. *Provided nevertheless, and be it further enacted*, That nothing in this act contained, shall be construed to authorize the bringing into either of the United States any person or persons, the importation of whom is by the existing laws of such state prohibited.

Section VII. *And be it further enacted*, That the forfeitures which shall hereafter be incurred under this or the said act to which this is in addition, not otherwise disposed of, shall accrue and be one moiety thereof to the use of the informer, and the other moiety to the use of the United States, except where the prosecution shall be first instituted on behalf of the United States, in which case, the whole shall be to their use.

THEODORE SEDGWICK, *Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

THOMAS JEFFERSON, *Vice President of the United States, and President of the Senate.*

APPROVED—May 10th. A. D. 1800,

JOHN ADAMS, *President of the United States.*

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Abſtract of an act of the Legiſlature of New-York, entitled, "An act for the gradual Abolition of Slavery," paſſed March 29, 1799.

CHILDREN born of ſlaves after the 4th. of July 1799, to be ſervants to the legal proprietor of the mother, males until twenty-eight, and females until twenty-five years of age.

Every ſuch child to be regiſtered within nine months from its birth, in the office of the clerk of the city or town where born, the record of which to be ſufficient evidence of its age.

A penalty of five dollars to be incurred by any maſter neglecting to regiſter within nine months, and one dollar for every ſubſequent month, until a return is made, but the clerk is bound to receive the return whenever offered, though the nine months be expired.

Perſon entitled to the ſervice of any ſuch child, may elect within one year after its birth to abandon his right to ſuch ſervice, by a notice under his hand lodged in the office of the town or city clerk where he reſides, in which caſe ſuch child is to be conſidered a pauper of the city or town where the owner of the mother reſides at the time of its birth, and may be bound out by the overſeers of the poor, like the children of other paupers.

The child until bound out, to be ſupported for the firſt year after its birth by the maſter, and afterwards by the ſtate, at an expence not exceeding three dollars and fifty cents per month, for which allowance by the ſtate, the account being firſt ſigned by the Mayor of the city or ſupervisors of the town where born, the Comptroller is authorized to draw a warrant on the Treaſury.

Any owner omitting to give ſuch notice of abandonment continues anſwerable for the maintenance of ſuch child, until the expiration of the above mentioned periods of ſervice.

Any owner of a ſlave may manumit ſuch ſlave by a certificate under his hand and ſeal.

Abſtract of an act, entitled, "An act reſpecting Slaves," paſſed by the Legiſlature of New-Jerſey, on the 14th. of March 1798.

EVERY negro, indian, mulatto or muſtee within this ſtate, at preſent a ſlave for life, to remain ſo unleſs manumitted according to law.

No ſlave to be admitted as a witneſs, in any caſe, civil or criminal, except that in criminal caſes one ſlave may be a witneſs againſt another.

Every contract made with a ſlave, void; and any perſon trading with a ſlave forfeits for each offence, three dollars to the owner.

Penalty of four dollars per day, payable to owner by any perſon harbouring, &c. his ſlave; ſuch penalty not, however, to exceed the value of the ſlave.

Perſon harbouring, &c. a ſlave liable for his value to owner in caſe of ſlave's death, diſability, &c.

Any perſon apprehending a ſlave ten miles from his maſter's houſe, without permiſſion in writing, or being known to be on his maſter's buſineſs, entitled to a reward of one dollar, and reaſonable charges.

Reward of two dollars for taking up a runaway ſlave from another ſtate, and having him committed

to gaol by a juſtice, and the ſlave to remain in priſon till his maſter pays the reward and all reaſonable charges.

Slaves aſſembled in a diſorderly tumultuous manner, may be ordered by any conſtable to diſperſe, and if they refuſe, ſuch conſtable ſhall apprehend them, and take them before a juſtice, who may ſend them home to their maſters, or commit them for a time not exceeding one week, or, at the requeſt of the maſter, order them to be whipped by the conſtable, not exceeding twenty laſhes; for which the conſtable ſhall be paid by the maſter one dollar.

Any ſlave ſeen or found from his maſter's houſe, after the hour of ten at night, except on his maſter's buſineſs, or carrying a gun on Sunday, may be apprehended and carried before the next juſtice, who, (if the ſlave cannot give a good account of himſelf,) may in his diſcretion ſend him home, commit him, or order him to be whipped in the manner above mentioned. This is not however, to prevent the ſlave from going to a place of worſhip, or from innocent recreation, or doing any other reaſonable act with his maſter's conſent.

Any maſter ſuffering his ſlave to beg, to forfeit eight dollars for each offence, one half to the uſe of the poor, and the other to the perſon proſecuting.

Any fraudulent or colluſive conveyance of an aged or decrepid ſlave to a perſon unable to maintain him is void, and the perſon making it incurs a penalty of forty dollars.

Any perſon bringing a ſlave into the ſtate, forfeits one hundred and forty dollars, to be ſued for by the collector of the townſhip, and paid by him to the county collector, and by the county collector into the State Treaſury; there is an exception in

favor of perſons coming to reſide in the ſtate, who may bring with them their ſlaves, and of ſojourners, who are not however to ſell their ſlaves within the ſtate.

Any citizen of the ſtate may bring in his ſlaves for ſervice, but not for ſale, on producing to the townſhip collector a certificate from a Judge of the Supreme Court or Court of Common Pleas, of the ſtate from which he comes, that they were the property of ſuch citizen at the time of paſſing this act, which with the affidavit of the party is to be recorded in the office of the county clerk.

All forfeitures to be paid by the townſhip collector recovering them to the county collector, and by him paid into the Treaſury, being firſt credited for neceſſary expences; and any collector neglecting or refuſing to proſecute for a forfeiture, ſhall forfeit and pay the ſum which he ought to have recovered, to be ſued for by any collector, and paid to the State Treaſurer.

Inhumanly treating and abuſing a ſlave, declared an indictable offence, puniſhable by a fine not exceeding forty dollars, to be paid to the overſeer of the poor where the offender reſides.

Owner of any ſlave or ſervant for years, born after the 26th. of November 1788, ſhall cauſe ſuch ſlave or ſervant to be taught to read, under penalty of thirty dollars, which is recoverable with coſts by the overſeers of the poor, whoſe duty it is expreſsly made, to proſecute for the ſame for the uſe of the poor.

Any perſon fitting out, equipping, manning, or otherwiſe preparing any ſhip or veſſel, to ſail from this ſtate for the purpoſe of carrying on a trade in ſlaves, to, from, or between Europe, Aſia, Africa or America, or in any place or country whatever,

or of tranſporting ſuch ſlaves to or from one place to another, forfeits the veſſel, cargo, tackle and apparel, which may be ſeized by any Juſtice, Sheriff or Coroner, and proſecuted by information *in rem*, in the Supreme Court, or any Court of Common Pleas of the ſtate.

Such veſſel, after judgment againſt her, ſhall be ſold at public ſale by the Sheriff (or Coroner if Sheriff be a party) of the county, and after deducting coſts and expences, one-eighth of the proceeds is to be paid to the perſon making ſeizure, and ſeven-eighths to the State Treaſury, for the uſe of the ſtate.

Penalty of one hundred and thirty dollars to be incurred by any perſon oppoſing ſuch ſeizure, one half to the ſtate, and the other to the proſecutor.

No ſlave to be removed out of the ſtate, with intention to change his reſidence, if he has reſided therein for twelve months, without his own conſent, if of age, teſtified on private examination, before a juſtice, or if under age without ſuch conſent, and alſo that of his parent teſtified as aforeſaid. The juſtice to make a record, and deliver a copy to ſuch ſlave, containing his name, age, condition and then place of abode, the reaſon of the removal, and the place to which he is to go. Any one ſelling a ſlave to a perſon out of the ſtate, his aiders and abettors ſeverally forfeit fifty dollars, one half to any perſon ſuing for the ſame, and the other to the townſhip from which ſuch ſlave is removed. No perſon liable to this penalty who removes to and reſides in any other of the United States, and takes his ſlaves with him.

Owner of ſlave may manumit him by writing under his hand and ſeal, executed in the preſence of

two witneſſes, provided ſuch ſlave be found in mind, under no bodily incapacity for labor, and not under the age of twenty-one, nor above the age of forty years, and the owner muſt previouſly obtain a certificate to that effect, ſigned by two overſeers of the poor, and two juſtices of the county where he reſides, which is to be recorded in the office of the county clerk; on a manumiſſion under theſe circumſtances, the owner is exonerated from any reſponſibility for the future maintenance of the perſon manumitted.

Slaves may be manumitted by laſt will and teſtament, under the reſtrictions preſcribed in the caſe of a manumiſſion by deed.

Slave not anſwering the above deſcriptions may be manumitted by writing, executed under hand and ſeal, in the preſence of two witneſſes, if the maſter or ſome perſon on behalf of ſuch ſlave, will, at the Court of Common Pleas of the county where he reſides, enter into bond to the ſtate with two ſufficient ſureties, in the ſum of five hundred dollars, to prevent ſuch ſlave from becoming a public charge. If the manumiſſion be by will, the executors to give bond with ſureties as aforeſaid.

Where no bond is given, the manumiſſion is void.

Manumitted ſlave is exonerated after he arrives to the age of forty years, from the payment of any bond, note or contract or performance of any indenture obtained againſt him in conſequence of ſuch manumiſſion.

The ſettlement of a manumitted ſlave is in the townſhip where the maſter was legally ſettled at the time of the manumiſſion, but he may afterwards gain a ſettlement for himſelf by the ſame means as a white perſon.

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Owner of a ſlave not manumitted according to law, is made liable at all times for his maintenance, but in caſe of his inſolvency, the ſlave being diſabled by ſickneſs or otherwiſe, is a charge on the townſhip where his owner is legally ſettled.

Free negro or mulatto from another ſtate not to travel or reſide in this ſtate without a certificate of his freedom, ſigned by two juſtices of the ſtate from which he comes; and any inhabitant knowingly harbouring, concealing, or employing ſuch negro or mulatto, or ſuffering him to live in his houſe, or other tenement, for one week, ſhall forfeit twelve dollars per week, during the continuance of the offence, for the uſe of any perſon who will ſue for the ſame.

No free negro or mulatto belonging to this ſtate, ſhall travel or remain in any other county than where his reſidence is, without a certificate ſigned by two juſtices, or by the county clerk under his ſeal of office, certifying the freedom of ſuch negro or mulatto.

Where a habeas corpus is brought to remove any negro, &c. out of the poſſeſſion of his claimant, the perſon to whom it is directed ſhall in return thereto ſet forth his claim, on which the proſecutor ſhall immediately join iſſue, and the court ſhall award proceſs, to ſummon a jury to attend at the next Circuit Court of the proper county to try the caſe.

The former laws relating to ſlaves, are repealed by this act.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE SEVENTH

Convention of Delegates

FROM THE

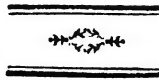
ABOLITION SOCIETIES

Eſtabliſhed in different parts of the United States,

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE THIRD DAY OF JUNE, ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND ONE, AND CONTINUED BY ADJOURNMENTS UNTIL THE SIXTH DAY OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.



—Philadelphia:—

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1801

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE SEVENTH

Convention of Delegates.

Philadelphia, June third, 1801,

10 *o'clock, A. M.*

A NUMBER of Delegates from Societies for promoting the abolition of ſlavery, eſtabliſhed in various parts of the United States, aſſembled at this time in the City Hall; when it appeared, from credentials produced, that the following perſons were deputed by their reſpective Societies, to repreſent them in this Convention.

Willet Seaman,
Abraham Ogier Stanſbury,
Adrian Hageman,
Nehemiah Allen,
Daniel D. Waters,
} *From New-York.*

Joſeph Bloomfield, Richard Hartſhorne, Thomas Clement, Robert Smith, jun. Phinehas Lord,	*From New-Jerſey.*
Thomas Harriſon, James Milnor, Walter Franklin, Samuel Bettle, George Williams, Othniel Alſop, Robert Frazer,	*From Pennſylvania.*
John Vaughan, Cyrus Newlin,	*From Delaware.*
John R. Fairlamb,	*From Richmond.*

Of whom the following attended.

Adrian Hageman,	Samuel Bettle,
Nehemiah Allen,	George Williams,
Daniel D. Waters,	Robert Frazer,
Richard Hartſhorne,	Othniel Alſop,
Thomas Clement,	Cyrus Newlin,
Robert Smith, jun.	John Vaughan,
Thomas Harriſon,	John R. Fairlamb.
Walter Franklin,	

Richard Hartſhorne was unanimouſly choſen Preſident, Othniel Alſop was appointed Secretary, and John Rafield, Door-keeper.

The following communications from the Societies of New-York, New-Jerſey, Pennſylvania, Delaware and Virginia, were read, and referred to Nehemiah Allen, Thomas Clement, Thomas Harriſon, John Vaughan, and John R. Fairlamb, who were deſired to report to a future meeting the objects which might appear to them proper to come under further notice.

Report of the "New-York Society for promoting the manumiſſion of Slaves, and protecting ſuch of them as have been or may be liberated," To the Convention of Delegates from the ſeveral Manumiſſion Societies in the United States, to be holden in Philadelphia, in June next.

SINCE the laſt report of the Society to the Convention, they have been going on in the purſuit of the great object of their aſſociation, without materially deviating from their ordinary courſe of proceedings; and they have ſtill the pleaſure to inform the Convention, that their exertions in the cauſe of humanity continue to be attended with a very pleaſing degree of ſucceſs.

At the date of their laſt report, there were forty perſons ſaid to be unlawfully held in bondage, under their care; ſince that time, twenty-four new caſes have been added to the number; of theſe perſons, thirteen have been liberated through their exertions—ſeventeen have been diſcharged from their care for want of ſufficient evidence to ſupport further proceedings—and thirty-four remain on their minutes as objects of future attention.

The Society have been for ſome time paſt informed, that the trade in negroes from the coaſt of Africa to the Weſt-India Iſlands, was very extenſively purſued from the States of Rhode-Iſland and Maſſachuſetts; and they have recently received information, that upwards of fifty veſſels from thoſe States now are, or very lately were, on the African coaſt, engaged in this inhuman traffic.

A Commander of one of theſe veſſels, being in this city on his return from St. Bartholomews, in the month of February laſt, was arreſted at the ſuit of the Society, under the law of the United States and is now a priſoner in this diſtrict. The Society feel confident, that juſtice in this caſe will be had; and they cannot but hope, that the puniſhment of a few ſuch offenders, will put an end in our country, to the unjuſt and cruel trade in queſtion.

By order of the Society, ſuits were inſtituted laſt year, againſt certain foreigners, for a traffic in black people from this ſtate to the ſouthern ſtates; theſe ſuits have not yet received a deciſion, owing to the abſence of ſome witneſſes who are neceſſary in order to the proſecution of the ſame; there is reaſon, however, to expect that they will terminate favorably to the cauſe of humanity.

The African School under the care of the Society, has been gradually increaſing ſince the laſt report to the Convention, and is now in a flouriſhing ſtate; for ſome time after the eſtabliſhment of this inſtitution, it was with reluctance that many of the people of color, ignorant of the benefits of Education, conſented to ſend their children to ſchool; a very favorable alteration has taken place in this reſpect; they have become more generally impreſſed with a ſenſe of the advantages and importance of Education, and more diſpoſed to avail themſelves of the privilege offered to them. The greater part of thoſe whoſe children attend the ſchool, contribute ſomething toward its ſupport, according to their ability and inclination; the effect of this arrangement is found highly uſeful: it not only renders the maintenance of the ſeminary more ſecure, and takes off a part of the burthen from the Society, but it, alſo, upon a very obvious principle, binds the contributors to the ſchool—

gives them a kind of intereſt in its proſperity—and excites them to keep their children more punctual in their attendance.

This inſtitution now contains about one hundred and thirty children of both ſexes, who continue in general, to exhibit the ſame good order, and the ſame capacity and diſpoſition to learn as formerly—no material alteration has taken place ſince the laſt report, except the pleaſing growth before mentioned.

The laws reſpecting ſlavery in the State of New York, remain nearly as they were at the date of the laſt report; at the ſeſſion of the Legiſlature of this State which was holden in the beginning of the year 1800, two Juſtices of the Supreme Court were appointed to reviſe the laws of the State, and to reduce into ſingle acts, the proviſions which were before diſtributed into many: among the reſt, all the former laws concerning ſlaves were reviſed and incorporated into one, with the addition of certain clauſes recommended in petitions promoted by the Society and forwarded to the Legiſlature, prohibiting, under a very ſevere penalty, the importation and exportation of ſlaves and ſervants, unleſs with certain preſcribed reſtrictions and limitations—A copy of ſaid law will accompany this report.

The Society conclude, by obſerving, that the principles of humanity and freedom, the primary objects of their aſſociation, are gradually gaining ground in this State, and that appearances in general are ſuch, as to make them believe their exertions have been uſeful, and that there is encouragement to continue and extend them.

WILLET SEAMAN, *Preſident.*

New-York, 5th. mo. 20th. 1801.

VALENTINE SEAMAN, *Secretary.*

To the Convention of Delegates from the different Abolition Societies, to be held in Philadelphia, in the Sixth month, (June) next.

THE New-Jerſey Society for promoting the gradual abolition of ſlavery, report,

That fully concurring in the propriety of the recommendation contained in the Conventions' addreſs of laſt year, with reſpect to holding another Convention, we have appointed as Delegates, Joſeph Bloomfield, Richard Hartſhorne, Thomas Clement, Robert Smith, jun. and Phinehas Lord, to repreſent this Society in the enſuing Convention, and they are authorized to aid in the formation of a Conſtitution, as recommended in the addreſs.

The circumſtances of the caſe mentioned in the report from the Richmond Society, ſo far obtained our ſympathy towards them, that the Preſident was authorized to tranſmit from our ſmall fund, the ſum of fifty dollars, which has been done, and the receipt thereof duly acknowledged. The hint relative to annual contributions from the different Societies towards a general fund, to be at the diſpoſal of the Convention, gave riſe to ſome diſcuſſion of the ſubject, which however was not fully decided on, but poſtponed to a future time.

The ſcattered ſituation of this Society, occaſions many embarraſſments and difficulties, of which Societies that are more compact, have no experience. Thoſe members who conſtitute the acting committees, are often ſo far apart, as to render it impracticable for them to act in concert in caſes of emergency, and are obliged to content themſelves with convening but three or four times a year. To add to the difficulty, in thoſe parts of

the State, where ſlaves are moſt numerous, and conſequently where caſes requiring interference moſt frequently occur, the cauſe of Abolition has but very few zealous ſupporters, and the buſineſs from thence, almoſt, or altogether devolves upon thoſe of the adjacent counties where Societies are regularly formed: Hence it follows, that the proſecution of caſes, whenever they occur, neceſſarily requires a conſiderable ſacrifice of time, and not unfrequently many days riding in ſerving writs, collecting evidence, attending Courts, &c. It therefore often happens, that caſes are unavoidably a long time before they can be brought to an iſſue. To the ſame cauſe may be attributed our deficiency in conforming to the ſeveral recommendations and requiſitions of the Convention—conſiderable attention has been from time to time paid to theſe ſeveral ſubjects, and pains taken to promote a compliance—exertions have again been repeated ſince laſt year; in a few inſtances the buſineſs has been faithfully attended to, but generally the accounts we have received are very imperfect, and conſequently the information hitherto forwarded, or which we ſhall be enabled now to communicate, muſt be partial and incomplete; within a large part of the State, and where ſlavery is moſt encouraged, as there are very few firm Friends to Abolition, and the few watched with an evil eye, it is very difficult to procure a correct repreſentation of the ſtate of the blacks; even in thoſe counties where emancipation is moſt approved, it is not eaſy to obtain a minute and juſt account; it is well known to thoſe who have much engaged in Abolition concerns, that although there are great numbers who ſecretly wiſh well to the cauſe, and are ever ready to commend the ſucceſsful exertions of others, yet very few of them are willing to

devote their time and attention, or to engage in the laborious parts of the buſineſs. Such information as we are enabled to give, we ſhall now proceed to ſtate in regular order.

Liſts of the officers, and other members of the Society have been made out, which will be annexed to, and forwarded with this report.

Conſiderable attention has been given towards procuring from our ſeveral county meetings an account of their proceedings in relieving perſons unlawfully held in bondage, in purſuance whereof we have obtained ſtatements from ſeveral counties which we ſhall ſubjoin: by theſe it appears, that in the county of Burlington, there have been, ſince the commencement of the inſtitution, eleven caſes of perſons relieved or reſcued from ſlavery, by the interference of the Society. In the county of Glouceſter nine, and in the counties of Middleſex and Eſſex, two. From the other two counties in which Societies have been eſtabliſhed, no information has been received—there are a number of caſes on the minutes of the acting committees, ſeveral of which are now pending in ſuit. We may further add, that it is believed many ſucceſsful exertions have been from time to time made by benevolent minded individuals for the relief of this oppreſſed people, no account of which has been or could be exhibited.

The information we have received on the ſubject will not enable us to convey a very explicit repreſentation of the condition of the blacks—their circumſtances eſſentially vary in different parts of theState—In Eaſt-Jerſey, ſlaves are very numerous, and although inſtances not unfrequently occur, of very cruel uſage to them, yet in general they are mildly treated, more eſpecially among the Low-

Dutch, who are poſſeſſed of a large number, and conduct towards them with great lenity; they watch them cloſe, and oblige them to work hard, but in return feed and clothe them well. Although the oppoſition publicly made from this part of the State to the Abolition of Slavery has hitherto been ſo formidable, it is nevertheleſs believed that the cauſe is faſt gaining ground there, and that light is ſpreading; More of a diſpoſition has lately been manifeſted by Slave-holders to countenance ſuch of their ſlaves as are anxious to uſe endeavours to purchaſe their freedom. The following account, forwarded from the county meeting for Eſſex and Middleſex, we believe, may be taken as conveying in general terms the ſituation of the blacks in the eaſtern counties, "They appear, moſtly, pretty comfortably provided for, and ſome of the free, hold, faſt and moveable property—the induſtrious among them find pretty ſteady employment, but the moral conduct of many does not appear ſo encouraging and praiſe worthy, as would be deſirable." Throughout the weſtern part of the State, there are, comparatively, but few ſlaves, and the number of theſe continually diminiſhing. Some conception of this may be formed, by the following information ſtated in the report from the county of Glouceſter.

At the time the cenſus was taken by order of the General Government in 1791, there were in that county 191 ſlaves; when taken by direction of this Society in 1799, only 47, and this preſent year, according to the cenſus now taking by Government, (nearly gone through) the number is ſtill leſs. We think it may be ſaid, that with a few exceptions, the ſlaves in this part of the ſtate, are kindly uſed, more ſo it is apprehended of latter time; and the practice of ſlave-holding is becoming

daily more unpopular. In ſpeaking of the moral conduct and general character of thoſe who are free, we are ſomewhat embarraſſed, but we apprehend that the following deſcription, intended more particularly to fit Burlington and Glouceſter counties, will generally apply throughout the weſtern part of the State—Many are looſe in their morals, too fond of unprofitable company, idling away their time, and waſting their ſubſtance; but as a general obſervation, we believe it will be found true upon inveſtigation, that waving any allowance which in juſtice out to be made for the great diſadvantages under which they labour, and contraſting their conduct with that of the poorer claſs of whites, the balance will be rather in favour of the black people: as domeſtic ſervants, waiters, coachmen, &c. the preference is decidedly given them, and as labourers they conſtitute a valuable part of the community—A few are mechanics, and ſome of them very reſpectable, and there appears an increaſing attention to the placing out children in a way to acquire trades. We could enumerate a variety of inſtances, of blacks, who in their reſpective neighbourhoods, exhibit examples of ſobriety, induſtry, occonomy, and uprightneſs, well worthy of imitation, regulating their families well, and reſpected by the white inhabitants. Some of them hold real eſtate, free and diſincumbered, and a conſiderable number ſupport themſelves and families comfortably. Attention has been given in various neighbourhoods, to promote their moral and religious improvement.

An account of Free-ſchools in Burlington for the inſtruction of the blacks, was forwarded by this Society three years ago. Since that period, thoſe ſchools have been ſuffered to drop, but it is pleaſing at this time to obſerve the good fruits of

which they were productive, manifeſted in ſeveral ſtriking inſtances. A ſimilar eſtabliſhment was likewiſe, for ſome time continued at Salem, and another for a ſhorter period, at Trenton. The ſchooling of black children does not in general appear to obtain that attention which its importance requires, yet it is believed there is a growing care in this reſpect. We do not know of any ſchools at preſent among us, excluſively for them, but in moſt parts of the ſtate, and very commonly in the weſtern diviſion, they are incorporated with white children in the various ſmall ſchools ſcattered over the country. In the city of Burlington there is a Free-ſchool, for the education of poor children ſupported by the profits of an eſtate left for that particular purpoſe, which ſchool is open for the reception of black, equally with white, children. The account from Glouceſter county on this head ſtates, that in ſeveral parts of that county, there are funds eſtabliſhed for the ſchooling of poor children, white and black, without diſtinction, in the whole about £1000; and many of the black children, being placed by their parents under the care of white maſters, receive at leaſt as good a moral, and ſchool education, as the lower claſs of whites.

We tranſmitted in 1796, the reports of trials and adjudications relative to Africans. A ſtatement of ſuch as have taken place ſince that period will be tranſmitted.

No effort has been attempted ſince the reviſion of our Slave-laws in 1798, to obtain an amelioration of the laws on this ſubject. It was apprehended that a ſuſpenſion of ſuch exertions for ſometime would be beſt.

The recommendation relative to periodical diſcourſes on the ſubject of ſlavery, and the means of its abolition, has not been put in practice, from an apprehenſion, that it would not be productive of much advantage in this State.

Our reſpective county meetings have repeatedly been adviſed to keep accurate regiſters of all deeds of manumiſſion executed within their precincts. We believe the recommendation has been in a good meaſure complied with.

There is a Standing Committee of this Society denominated, "The Committee of Publication;" the deſign of which is to publiſh from time to time in ſuch manner as they may deem expedient, pieces, extracts, or eſſays, on the ſubject of emancipation, tending to promote the views of this Aſſociation; we could wiſh that this mode of advancing the cauſe of Abolition, was more attended to, for we are convinced that much good might be done, by the diſtribution of ſuitable publications on the ſubject.

No inſtances have come to our knowledge of negroes from St. Domingo, retained here as ſlaves contrary to the decree of the National Convention of France.

Nothing has been done by direction of this Society to diſcourage the uſe of articles manufactured by ſlaves; but individuals, Members of the Society and others, have refrained from uſing them.

In the concluſion of our report, we cannot but lament, that at this period of time, juſt after the cloſe of the enlightened eighteenth century, the State of New-Jerſey, in the centre of the American Confederacy, ſo celebrated throughout the earth for Liberty and Independence, ſhould coun-

tenance, within its own bofom, the moſt palpable violation of thoſe boaſted equal rights, by withholding from ſeveral thouſand human beings their juſt and natural claim to Liberty. But we think there is reaſon to hope, that the pleadings of juſtice and humanity, in behalf of the oppreſſed, do, and will prevail. Let us not then be diſmayed, but perſevere in our exertions, until this dark ſpot upon the riſing character of our highly favoured country, be utterly obliterated.

Signed in behalf of a general meeting of the New-Jerſey Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, held at Burlington, Fifth-month fifth, 1801.

JOSEPH BLOOMFIELD, *Preſident.*

Atteſt.

ROBERT SMITH, jun. *Secretary.*

To the Convention of Delegates from the different Abolition Societies, propoſed to be held in the City of Philadelphia, on the third day of the ſixth month, 1801.

WE have with ſatisfaction complied with the recommendation of the laſt Convention, by electing Thomas Harriſon, James Milnor, Walter Franklin, Samuel Bettle, George Williams, Othniel Alſop, and Robert Frazer, to repreſent us in that which is propoſed to be held this year.

We continue to believe these Assemblies likely to prove eminently useful, and we cannot but regret, that the want of such conviction, or other causes should have occasioned on the part of some of our sister Societies, a less warm and zealous co-operation in their favour. A reciprocal communication of sentiment and information on the interesting objects of our institutions, and a general consistency of conduct and exertions, can, we conceive, in no better way be maintained, than through the medium of occasional, or stated Conventions.

The Convention of last year was forcibly impressed with this persuasion, and have, therefore, suggested the idea of giving permanency to these establishments, by the formation of a Constitution for their future government; we have given our concurrence to the plan, and have vested in our present delegation, suitable powers for aiding in its completion.

Consonant with this design, is that of establishing a fund to be at the disposal of these bodies; this also hath met our approbation, and we have agreed to aid it with an advance of one hundred dollars.

With the present communication you will receive a list of our officers for the present year, and of the members added to our Society since the date of our last address; also the copy of a law, and of an article of the Constitution of Georgia, respecting the importation of slaves; we likewise transmit you a copy of an address, which we have believed it our duty to lay before the people of colour in this city and suburbs; it was read to them by a committee appointed for that purpose, at their several places of worship; and also at three societies

which they have formed with the benevolent deſign of aſſiſting each others families, in times of ſickneſs and misfortune. Their families were alſo viſited, and copies of the addreſs left with them. From the report of the committee it appears, that the number of families which they viſited was ſix hundred and fifty-nine, containing about twenty-three hundred and thirteen perſons; that their communications were received in a reſpectful manner, and that many evinced a lively and grateful ſenſe of our care and anxiety for their welfare. Several hundred blacks, and people of colour reſide in white families, and though they have not had the advantage of a perſonal viſit from the committee, many of them have been furniſhed with a copy of the addreſs.

A mixture of ſatisfaction and regret, muſt be experienced by every feeling mind, in the concluding obſervations of our committee; "The greater number," they ſay, "live decently and comfortably, many of them poſſeſſing houſes and other valuable property; ſome were found ſupporting their aged parents and grand parents, in a ſtate of eaſe and comfort, and others providing for orphan and deſtitute children; and on the whole, we are united in the opinion, that they live as reputably, and conduct themſelves as orderly, as white people poſſeſſing equal opportunities of improvement: yet it is with pain we have to obſerve, that idleneſs, diſſipation, and want of œconomy, have reduced ſome of their families to poverty and diſtreſs." The latter part of this deſcription is indeed a melancholy one, but we truſt in the bleſſing of Providence, on our continued exertions, for the intellectual and religious improvement of theſe people, as the ſureſt means of retaining, in the

path of virtue, thoſe who have not yet forſaken it, and of once more adding to their number, thoſe who have been ſeduced away by the blandiſhments of folly and vice.

Schools for their education are now eſtabliſhed in the City and Liberties of Philadelphia, one of which is under our immediate inſpection; a liſt of them will accompany this addreſs. Subſcriptions have been obtained for this important object, amounting in the whole to 530 ½ dollars per annum for three years.

In reply to that part of the addreſs of the laſt Convention which relates to the inhuman practice of kidnapping free perſons, we have only to mention, that but two attempts of this kind within this ſtate have recently come to our knowledge, and as they are in a courſe of legal inveſtigation, we deem it improper to detail the particular circumſtances attending them.

The various requiſitions of former Conventions having been heretofore as fully anſwered as was in our power, and nothing further of a nature requiring preſent notice having ſince occurred, we conclude with wiſhing you harmony in your deliberations, and a ſucceſsful iſſue to your exertions in the cauſe of Juſtice and Humanity.

Signed by order and in behalf of the Pennſylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

JAMES PEMBERTON, *Preſident.*

Atteſt,

TIMOTHY PAXSON, SAMUEL HARVEY, } *Secretaries.*

In compliance with the requiſitions of former Conventions of Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies, the Delaware Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, make the following,

Report,

THE Delaware Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and for the relief and protection of blacks and people of colour unlawfully held in bondage or otherwiſe oppreſſed, was eſtabliſhed on the twelfth day of the twelfth month, 1800.—A copy of our conſtitution, and a liſt of our preſent officers and members, accompany this report.

Dr. John Vaughan and Cyrus Newlin, are appointed on our part, to attend the Convention of Delegates, to be held the firſt fourth-day in the ſixth month, 1801, at Philadelphia.

This Society intends to have printed and publiſhed, copies of the Laws of the State of Delaware, ſo far as they regard the blacks and people of colour; and they propoſe, when that ſhall be done, to forward a copy to a future Convention.

A liſt of caſes now under the care of our acting committee is alſo herewith forwarded.

In this ſtate, ſlaves are generally treated leniently; there are nevertheleſs many perſons who, in defiance of the common duties of humanity, permit them to ſuffer, from ſcanty food and cloathing, and puniſh them cruelly.

The general temper of opinion, is againſt the freedom of perſons of colour, but this ſpirit is milder in the northern than in the ſouthern part of this ſtate.

Several blacks in each of our counties hold real property, and thoſe are generally induſtrious and ſober perſons—we believe they cannot be accuſed of greater immoralities than the poorer claſs of white perſons—there are but few mechanics among the enſlaved or free blacks—they are in general day labourers or farmers.

By the cenſus made this year, it appears that there are in this ſtate, 2754 free blacks and people of colour, and 1838 ſlaves.

There is a diminution of ſeven hundred and twenty-four ſlaves ſince the year 1790. We ſuſpect this decreaſe has not ariſen entirely from the progreſs of the generous ſpirit of emancipation, but partly from the trade of exportation, which has been carried on for ſeveral years paſt.

A petition in favour of the gradual abolition of ſlavery was preſented to our Legiſlature at their laſt ſeſſion, but no meaſures were taken upon it.

The Society, as ſuch, has not yet been able to advance the education of blacks and people of colour, but a ſchool is kept here on the firſt day of the week by one of its members, who inſtructs them gratis, in reading, writing and arithmetic; ſeldom more than twenty ſcholars attend; they are generally attentive, and appear to receive inſtruction as readily as white perſons labouring under ſimilar diſadvantages.

No periodical diſcourſes have yet been eſtabliſhed.

No publications tending to promote the abolition of ſlavery have yet been diſtributed by us; but an addreſs to the public on this important ſubject is now prepared, and will ſpeedily be publiſhed.

We have not yet tried any cafe under the decree of the National Convention of France.

Nothing has been done by this Society towards difcouraging the ufe of articles manufactured by flaves.

The addrefs from the Convention of 1796, to the free people of colour has not yet been diftributed by the Society.

Signed by order of the Delaware Society, by

FRANCIS A. LATTA, *Prefident.*

Wilmington, fifth month, 23d. 1801.

ZACHARIAH JESS, *Secretary.*

Addrefs of the Virginia Abolition Society, to the enfuing General Convention, to be holden in Philadelphia.

Friends and Fellow Labourers,

IT is a confolation to us, amidft the many dangers and difficulties with which we are furrounded, to obferve that firm and perfevering difpofition, manifefted in the addrefs of the laft Convention to the different Societies, to purfue, with unremitting vigilance, the great and benevolent objects which gave exiftence to our inftitutions.

While we fincerely unite in opinion, with the laft Convention, as to the importance of fitting the minds of our unfortunate brethren of African de-

ſcent, "To fill that ſtation in the ſcale of being, from which they have been forced by the domineering ſpirit of power and uſurpation," we are nevertheleſs, obliged at preſent to turn our attention from the ſubject of education, in order to direct our public efforts againſt that rapacious diſpoſition which emboldens many petty tyrants among us to trample upon the rights of this people, even in violation of the laws of *our* ſtate.

We have inſtituted many ſuits on behalf of theſe ſufferers; and numerous are the inſtances of unlawful oppreſſion, which ſtill cry aloud to humanity for that aſſiſtance it is not in our power to afford. This is, indeed, a melancholy criſis to us; many, alſo, who were once hearty in the cauſe of emancipation, taking a retroſpect view of the recent plot which threatened our internal tranquility with a revolutionary convulſion, have now thought proper to abandon it as dangerous to the well-being of ſociety. You ſee, then, the languid and critical ſituation to which the friends of humanity are reduced in Virginia. You know from the hiſtory of our ſtate, the number of objects that muſt neceſſarily come under our notice: in fine, you know how much we have to do, and how few there are to do it. Notwithſtanding, however, the many difficulties we have to encounter, and the gloomy proſpects with which we are on all ſides ſurrounded; there are ſtill a number among us, who, feeling a firm perſuaſion that it is a juſt and righteous cauſe in which we have embarked, are determined to continue their efforts ſo long as any good may reſult therefrom. Under this determination, then, and relying with confidence, that your views in the cauſe of humanity, are not merely local, we feel perfect freedom in ſoliciting ſuch pecuniary aid

from you, as it may be in your power to afford us. Trufting you will weigh the fubject according to its merits, we reft fatisfied that your determination will be made upon the principles of extended humanity and benevolence.

Under a perfuafion, that the day will arrive, wherein the light of freedom will be univerfally diffufed through this land, we feel an ardent defire to unite with you, in every laudable effort to haften its approach: And may that Being, who rules the deftinies of the Univerfe, give us ftrength, courage and wifdom to perform thofe things only, that fhall appear juft in his fight.

Signed by order, and in behalf of a meeting of the Virginia Abolition Society, holden in the city of Richmond the twenty-fecond of the fifth month, 1801.

JAMES WOOD, *Prefident.*

Atteft.

TARLTON W. PLEASANTS, *Secretary.*

Adjourned till to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

June fourth.

The Convention met.

Prefent:

Richard Hartfhorne, Prefident,

Adrian Hageman,
Nehemiah Allen,
Daniel D. Waters,
Thomas Clement,
Robert Smith, jun.
Thomas Harrifon,
Robert Frazer,
James Milnor,
Walter Franklin,
Samuel Bettle,
George Williams,
John Vaughan,
Cyrus Newlin,
John R. Fairlamb,
Othniel Alfop,

The committee to whom were referred the communications received yesterday, introduced a report; which was read, and directed to be inserted on the minutes, as follows,

The Committee to whom were referred the several communications from the Abolition Societies, and who were directed to select and arrange such objects as require the attention of the Convention, beg leave to report,—

THAT they have minutely examined the several documents submitted to them, and are much pleased to find, that the generous principles of emancipation, are extending themselves over the northern and middle states—that the different Abolition Societies, are assiduous in their endeavours to lessen the miseries of those unfortunate blacks and people of colour, who are within the pales of legal bondage; and in preserving the freedom of such as are privileged to enjoy the invaluable blessing. We however have to regret, that the intolerent and inhuman practice of slavery, in all its forms, appears yet to be but feebly opposed in some of the states; and that in others, the exertions of the benevolent are inadequate to the task, without collateral aid.

In the States of New-York, New-Jersey, and Pennsylvania, the laudable work of African emancipation, is rapidly progressing: in Delaware, it is resumed with spirit and efficiency; but in Virginia, the system is so far restrained by popular prejudice, and legislative encroachment, as to require the fostering care of the Convention. We therefore propose, that means be devised, for aiding the Abolition Society of Richmond, in the prosecution of their arduous task; and suggest the

utility of eſtabliſhing a permanent fund, for the purpoſe of aſſiſting all ſuch Societies, as require pecuniary aid.

Conceiving alſo that the adoption of a ſyſtem, for the government of future Conventions, would give energy and ſtability to the organization, we propoſe, That a Conſtitution be formed, ſubmitted to the different Societies for their ratification, and returned to a Convention to be holden in this place.

Your committee deplore the neceſſity of repeating to you, that the horrid practice of kidnapping is perſiſted in, eſpecially in Maryland, in direct violation of the deareſt rights of Humanity, and in bold defiance of Law, and Moral Juſtice.

In North Carolina, laws exiſt, prohibiting individual emancipation; we ſuggeſt the neceſſity of an addreſs to the Legiſlature of that State, on the painful and momentous ſubject.

On reviewing the minutes of paſt Conventions we find the education of African children uniformly inculcated: and we truſt that the generous ſyſtem will be promoted and extended, by every poſſible means.

We have been informed by the Delegates from the Pennſylvania Society that two veſſels, engaged in the nefarious traffic in the perſons of their fellow men, have been captured and brought into the port of Philadelphia. One of them, the ſchooner Prudent of New-England, bound on a voyage from the coaſt of Africa to the Weſt-Indies, with a cargo of ſixteen ſlaves: this veſſel was condemned by the Diſtrict Court, and the blacks were placed by the Marſhal, under the care of the Society, who bound them by Indenture to ſuitable perſons,

reſiding chiefly in the country, adults for the term of four years, and minors, males, to the age of twenty-one, and females to the age of eighteen years. The other, the ſchooner Phebe, of Charleſton, South Carolina, captured by the ſame veſſel, while on a voyage from Africa to the Havanna, with a cargo of one hundred and ſixteen ſlaves. The Phebe is libelled, but the buſineſs has not yet proceeded to a legal termination. The blacks have, however, been placed out in like manner with thoſe above mentioned, except that bonds with ſureties have been given, that in caſe the reſult of a judicial inveſtigation ſhould be unfavourable, they ſhould be returned.

Believing that the preſent ſtate of public affairs, and the general temper of the public mind, are more favourable to the cauſe we have eſpouſed, than they have been for ſome time paſt, we recommend the formation and publication of a decent and manly addreſs to our fellow citizens on the ſubject: alſo, that an addreſs be preſented to the reſpective Abolition Societies, requeſting them to perſevere in well doing, for though ſome of them be reſtrained in the execution of their laudable work, and little is in their power to do, that *little* ſhould be done, if we wiſh to preſerve a conſcience void of the charge of omiſſion.

On behalf of the Committee,

THOMAS HARRISON, *Chairman.*

Council Chamber, June 4th. 1801.

The following refolution was laid on the table.

Refolved, That a Committee be appointed to examine and arrange, the various papers, and documents, belonging to the Convntion, on the fubject of flavery; that they prepare fuch an analyfis of their contents as may aid the important object of forming a correct hiftory of African flavery in the United States, and report the fame, together with fuch other information as they may be able to obtain, to the next Convention.

Adjourned till three o'clock this afternoon.

June fourth,—3 *o'clock*, P. M.

The Convention met.

Prefent:

Richard Hartfhorne, *Prefident*,

Adrian Hageman,	Walter Franklin,
Nehemiah Allen,	Samuel Bettle,
Daniel D. Waters,	George Williams,
Thomas Clement,	John Vaughan,
Robert Smith, jun.	Cyrus Newlin,
Thomas Harrifon,	John R. Fairlamb,
Robert Frazer,	Othniel Alfop.
James Milnor,	

The confideration of the report of the committee who had under care the communications addreffed to this Convention, being refumed, the following refolutions were adopted:—

Refolved, That that part of it, which relates to the fubject of affording pecuniary aid to the Richmond Society, be referred to James Milnor and Nehemiah Allen.

Resolved, That so much of the above mentioned report, as relates to the formation of an essay of a Constitution, and the establishment of a permanent fund, be referred to a committee of five, and that Adrian Hageman, Robert Smith, jun. Walter Franklin, John Vaughan, and John R. Fairlamb, be the committee.

Resolved, That the formation of an essay of an address to the respective Abolition Societies, be committed to Nehemiah Allen, Thomas Clement, and James Milnor.

The resolution this morning, laid on the table, relative to the appointment of a committee to arrange and form an abstract of the various papers and documents belonging to the Convention, on the subject of slavery, was adopted; and a committee, consisting of Thomas Harrison, James Milnor, Walter Franklin, Samuel Bettle, George Williams, Robert Frazer, and Othniel Alsop, appointed to carry the same into effect.

Adjourned till ten o'clock to-morrow morning.

June fifth.

The Convention met.

Present:

Richard Hartshorne, President,

Adrian Hageman,	Walter Franklin,
Nehemiah Allen,	Samuel Bettle,
Daniel D. Waters,	George Williams,
Thomas Clement,	John Vaughan,
Robert Smith, jun.	Cyrus Newlin,
Thomas Harrison,	John R. Fairlamb,
Robert Frazer,	Othniel Alsop.
James Milnor.	

The committee appointed on the ſubject of forming a Conſtitution for the government of future Conventions, introduced an eſſay, which was read, and ordered to lie on the table.

The committee appointed to conſider the ſubject of affording pecuniary aid to the Richmond Society introduced the following report, which was agreed to, and the Preſident is directed to pay the ſum therein granted, to the Delegate from that Society, for its uſe.

" *The Committee appointed to take into conſideration that part of the report of the Committee of arrangement, which relates to a grant of money, propoſed to be made to the Richmond Society,*

" *Report,*

" That, in their opinion, it would be proper for this Convention to grant the ſaid Society, the ſum of one hundred dollars, to aid them in the benevolent undertakings which they have engaged in."

Adjourned till five o'clock this afternoon.

June fifth,—5 *o'clock*, P. M.

The Convention met.

Preſent:

Richard Hartſhorne, Preſident,

Adrian Hageman,	Walter Franklin,
Nehemiah Allen,	Samuel Bettle,
Daniel D. Waters,	George Williams,
Thomas Clement,	John Vaughan,
Robert Smith, jun.	Cyrus Newlin,
Thomas Harriſon,	John R. Fairlamb,
Robert Frazer,	Othniel Alſop.
James Milnor,	

The following communication from the Alexandria Society, was read, and ordered to lie on the table:

To the Convention of Delegates from the different Abolition Societies, appointed to meet in Philadelphia on the first Wednesday in June next.

THE undersigned have been deputed by the "Alexandria Society for the relief and protection of persons illegally held in bondage," to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from the committee appointed by the last Convention, held in Philadelphia, and to forward an address to the present Convention.

Our Society conceiving that any objects which might at this time be attained by the mission of Delegates to the Convention, would not be commensurate with the expence which must necessarily be incurred thereby, deem it advisable to decline sending any. At the same time they declare that this omission arises not from an indifference to the cause in which we are engaged, but from a conviction that the money requisite for such a measure may be applied more beneficially to other objects connected with the design of our association.

The undersigned judge it superfluous to iterate such facts and information on the several subjects of recommendation, as have been communicated in former reports to the respective Conventions; and few recent occurrences of interesting note relative to the concerns of our Society, have taken place, which demand the particular regard of the present Convention.

Of five suits for freedom, pending in the district court at Dumfries, at the time of our last address, three have terminated in favour of the claimants; in the other two the petitioners were unsuccessful.—About the close of last summer, some persons by the name of Thomas, a branch of a numerous and well known family of that name in Maryland, were apprehended in this town, by a person who pretended to claim them in right of his wife. The negroes prayed our court for leave to institute a suit for their freedom, alleging they were free-born, being descended in the female line from a white woman. The court, however, judging them inhabitants of Maryland, refused to take cognizance of their case, and they were delivered up to the claimant, who promised to permit them to sue without molestation in the county where he resided but who, with a turpitude disgraceful to human nature, sold them before they reached his residence, to a slave driver from North Carolina. This purchaser conveyed them to Virginia and lodged them in Dumfries jail, where by the aid of our Society they obtained a warrant and cited their holder before the magistrates of that place to enter into recognizance for their appearance at the next court to petition for leave to institute a suit for the recovery of freedom. But the magistrates, whether through ignorance or wilfulness, instead of compelling him to give bond for their appearance as the law directs, undertook to decide on the validity of their claim and surrendered them to the holder, by which proceeding five persons, in our opinion justly entitled to liberty, have been violently wrested from their connexions, and consigned, in all probability, to irredeemable slavery. The first claimant of the negroes took out a writ against one of the members of our Society who

interfered in their behalf. The cauſe has not yet come to trial, but let it terminate as it may, it will immerſe us in ſome expenſe.

The unfortunate riſing of the negroes at Richmond laſt ſummer, partial and inconſiderable as it was, furniſhed a pretext for additional rigour toward thoſe wretched victims of oppreſſion. Nor were the labours of our Society altogether exempt from the effects of this renovated perſecution againſt the helpleſs Africans. The eſtabliſhment of patroles to prevent the unlawful aſſembling of negroes diffuſed conſternation among even the moſt guiltleſs, and deterred them in a meaſure from meeting for the pureſt purpoſes. The conſequence of this terror extended to our Sunday ſchool and produced ſuch an abandonment as rendered a temporary ſuſpenſion adviſable. It was accordingly intermitted during the winter, but has been lately revived by ſome of the individual members, the Society having virtually relinquiſhed its patronage, as no teacher of adequate merit could be obtained to take charge of it. The good effects viſibly reſulting from this inſtitution are, we truſt, amply ſufficient to ſtimulate its ſupporters to a perſeverance in ſo laudable an undertaking.

Situateas we have hitherto been in a State where intereſt tends to perpetuate prejudice and check conviction; where general cuſtom gives general countenance to the diſgraceful practice of ſlavery, and ſtifles the conſcious enormity of a crime which threatens, at one time or other, to involve in indiſcriminate ruin the innocent with the guilty where it is tolerated, connected with a policy where the weight of legiſlative authority was avowedly hoſtile to every movement of our proceedings, it is not ſurprizing that the difficulties we have had to en-

counter ſhould be too potent for men of weak nerves or apathetick conſtitutions. In conſequence the number of our members has diminiſhed, but this diminution has, we truſt, rather condenſed than evaporated the ſpirit of the Society. And we cheriſh the hope that a more auſpicious era has commenced with our ſeparation from that State whoſe political profeſſions are at open hoſtility with its domeſtick conduct. We ſhall endeavour to improve to the intereſt of our inſtitution any advantage which this event may place within our reach.

Done at Alexandria, in the District of Columbia, this 28th. day of May, 1801.

ARCHIBALD M'CLEAN.
GEORGE DRINKER.

An eſſay of an addreſs to our fellow citizens of the United States, on the ſubject of ſlavery, being introduced and read, it was, on motion,

Reſolved, That James Milnor and John Vaughan be a committee to conſider and reviſe the ſame, and produce it for further conſideration to-morrow morning.

It being ſtated by James Milnor, one of the committee under appointment to draft an addreſs to the different Abolition Societies, that, in conſequence of numerous other engagements, he apprehended he ſhould be unable to give that attention to the ſubject which its importance demands, and that he therefore requeſted to be releaſed; his requeſt was complied with, and Robert Frazer named in his ſtead.

The form of a Conſtitution introduced this morning, being now again taken up, and deliberately conſidered, was agreed to as follows:—

The Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States, in Convention aſſembled, this ſixth day of June, A. D. 1801; *having been required by the Societies which they repreſent, to form a Conſtitution for the Convention; and being of opinion that many advantages would be derived from ſuch a meaſure, do recommend the following*

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.

I. The Convention ſhall be called, "*The American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the condition of the African race.*

II. It ſhall be compoſed of ſuch repreſentatives as the reſpective Societies within the United States may think proper to appoint; provided that the number do not exceed ten from any one Society.

ARTICLE II.

I. The officers of the Convention ſhall conſiſt of a Preſident, Secretary and Treaſurer, who ſhall be elected annually by ballot.

II. The Preſident ſhall preſide at all meetings of the Convention, and preſerve order; he ſhall have no vote, except were there is an equality of votes; in ſuch caſe he ſhall have a caſting vote.

III. The Secretary ſhall keep accurate records of the proceedings of the Convention.

IV. The Treaſurer ſhall keep the money and other perſonal property of the Convention; he ſhall before he enters upon his office, give to the Preſident a bond in the ſum of not leſs than one thou-

ſand dollars, for the faithful diſcharge of the duties thereof: He ſhall furniſh to the Convention annually, a ſtatement of his accounts, and ſhall pay all orders drawn in manner herein after mentioned.

ARTICLE III.

I. The Convention ſhall meet annually in the city of Philadelphia, on the ſecond Monday in January.

II. A repreſentation from three Societies ſhall be a quorum to tranſact buſineſs, but a leſs number may adjourn from time to time.

III. The Convention ſhall have full power to make ſuch rules and regulations as they may deem neceſſary for their internal government; provided the ſame do not contravene this Conſtitution.

IV. Additions and amendments may be made to this Conſtitution, on the propoſition of the Convention, and concurrence of a majority of two thirds of the members convened.

ARTICLE IV.

I. An acting committee ſhall be annually appointed by the Convention, who ſhall ſuperintend the publication of minutes, books, &c. the tranſmiſſion of addreſſes and other communications, and tranſact ſuch buſineſs of a general nature as may require attention during the receſs of the Convention.

II. All communications made to the Convention, during their receſs, ſhall be addreſſed to the acting committee.

ARTICLE V.

I. All funds of the Convention, arifing from contribution or otherwife, fhall be at their fole difpofal; fpecial attention being at all times had to the exigencies of individual Societies.

II. All orders drawn upon the Treafury fhall be figned by the Prefident, and counterfigned by one or more members of the acting committee.

ARTICLE VI.

Special meetings of the Convention may be called in cafes of emergency, by the Prefident and acting committee, at the requeft of any two Societies of different ftates.

On motion,

Refolved, That copies of the above be tranfmitted as early as may be, to the different Societies for adoption, fhould it meet their approbation.

Adjourned till to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

June fixth.

The Convention met.

Prefent:

Richard Hartfhorne, *Prefident.*

Adrian Hageman,	Samuel Bettle,
Nehemiah Allen,	George Williams,
Daniel D. Waters,	John Vaughan,
Robert Smith, junior,	Cyrus Newlin,
Thomas Harrifon,	John R. Fairlamb,
Walter Franklin,	Othniel Alfop.

The committee appointed to revife the addrefs to our fellow citizens on the fubject of flavery, now produced the fame, which being deliberately confidered by paragraphs, was adopted as follows, viz.

To the Citizens of the United States.

Friends and Fellow Citizens,

VARIOUS Societies having been formed, in different parts of the Union, for the purpofe of promoting the Abolition of Slavery, they have feveral times met in convention to deliberate on the beft means of furthering the humane work they have undertaken.—We, the feventh affociation of Delegates from thefe bodies, now convened in the city of Philadelphia, appealing to the Searcher of hearts for the rectitude of our intentions, believe it our duty to addrefs you with a few remarks, to which we folicit your candid confideration and attention. Believing as we do, that the benevolent Author of nature has made no eflential diftinction in the human race, and that all the individuals of the great family of mankind have a common claim upon the general fund of natural bounties, we have never hefitated to avow the objects of our inftitutions, nor the honeft means by which we hope for their ultimate attainment. Yet we are fenfible that many of our fellow citizens have laboured under miftaken impreffions on both thefe points, and have afcribed to us views as inconfiftent with the policy of our country, as with our real profpects. It is true we contemplate the deliverance from flavery of all the blacks and people of color in thefe ftates, fooner or later, by fuch means as your humanity, and the wifdom of our rulers may fuggeft;

and though we think the exiſting laws of ſome of the ſtates unneceſſarily ſevere; yet we pointedly diſavow any wiſh to contravene them, while they remain in force, or to hazard the peace and ſafety of the community by the adoption of ill adviſed and precipitate meaſures.

In common with the reſt of our fellow citizens, we ſincerely deplore the late attempts at inſurrection by ſome of the ſlaves of the ſouthern ſtates, and participate in the dreadful ſenſations the inhabitants in their vicinity muſt have felt on ſo awful an occaſion. It is fervently to be hoped that they may induce a weighty conſideration of the ſource of the evil, and of the beſt means of its future prevention. We are convinced, that ſo long as a relation ſubſiſts between cauſe and effect, and the preſent policy of thoſe ſtates is purſued, ſo long the deprecated calamity is to be dreaded; and while we all revolt with horror from the anticipation of an organization on the part of the ſlaves, we conceive there is a certain ſtate of degradation and miſery to which they may be reduced, a certain point of deſperation to which the human mind may be brought, and beyond which it cannot be driven.—If then the premonitory ſigns of this criſis have appeared, if a recurrence of the deſperate feelings which gave birth to the deſign is to be ſo awfully dreaded, ought not the attention of every humane mind to be exerted in deviſing adequate means for averting ſo enormous a danger? We advance with confidence our firm belief, a belief founded on mature reflection, that to be effectual they muſt be in many reſpects different from thoſe which have heretofore been adopted. An amelioration of the preſent ſituation of the ſlaves, and the adoption of a ſyſtem of gradual emancipation, while it would tend to remove the charge of in-

conſiſtency between the conſtitutional declaration, and the legal proviſions of ſome of the ſtates; would alſo be an effectual ſecurity againſt revolt. If the ſeverity of their treatment were leſſened, and the hope of freedom for them or their poſterity were held forth as the reward of good behaviour, the ſlaves would be bound by perſonal intereſt to be civil, orderly, and induſtrious. It has been argued, that they are not qualified to enjoy the bleſſings of freedom, even under a gradual emancipation: but are they not rational creatures, and why will not the ſame methods which have civilized others, in the courſe of time alſo civilize them? A principal mean of effecting this purpoſe, would be to inſtruct them in the duties and obligations of religion, morality, and ſocial juſtice. We find that the cultivated inhabitants of different countries and even the individuals of the ſame country, have very different ideas on theſe ſubjects. Is it therefore to be wondered at that the poor illiterate blacks, who are ſo little inſtructed in the principles of Chriſtianity, and ſtrangers to the refined ſentiments which reſult from education; is it, we aſk, to be wondered at, that they are ſuſceptible of error and deluſion?

Fellow citizens of the ſouthern ſtates! we invite your calm and diſpaſſionate attention to the ſubject; and, with the aid of that Being to whom we muſt look for inſtruction in this, as in all our other undertakings, we firmly truſt that you will be enabled to deviſe ſuch meaſures as may terminate in your own peace, and ſecurity, and the benefit of that unfortunate race whoſe miſeries excite our ſympathy, and the improvement of whoſe ſituation is the object of our anxious ſolicitude and care.

Another ſubject that requires general attention, is the inhuman crime of kidnapping, which, in ſome parts of our country, has recently increaſed to an alarming degree. The friends of liberty view with horror the perpetuation of this abominable practice, and the holders of ſlaves have no ſecurity for them, as property, during its continuance. There is therefore a common intereſt in the removal of the grievance; and we confidently look for the aſſiſtance of the humane of all deſcriptions in detecting and bringing to puniſhment, theſe ſhameleſs violations of the rights of their fellow men.

It is alſo a lamentable fact, that notwithſtanding the general repugnance of all well diſpoſed citizens to any further importation of Africans into this country, or concern in the infamous commerce in the perſons of our fellow creatures, notwithſtanding the prohibitions of the laws of moſt of the ſtates on this ſubject, and the ſtrict inſtructions of thoſe of the general government, upwards of two hundred veſſels, belonging to our own citizens, are employed in the purchaſe and tranſportation of ſlaves from Africa to the Weſt-Indies, and the ſouthern parts of this country.

The rage for this traffic is ſo far extended by avarice, that many perſons have riſqued their all in its purſuit; and it ſeems that nothing can ſtop the cruel and diſgraceful enormities which are thus committed, in violation of the dictates of humanity, and the laws and policy of our country, but a more general activity and exertion on the part of good citizens, in the diſcovery and proſecution of the offenders. So large a number of veſſels are fitted out for this trade, and ſent to the coaſt of Africa from the eaſtern ſtates, that we are induced

earneſtly to call on our brethren of thoſe parts, to aid in its ſuppreſſion; and ſurely as they have done away the evil of perſonal ſlavery among themſelves, they cannot want inducements to enforce the laws againſt ſuch of their citizens as ſet them at defiance, by purſuing a prohibited commerce, as ſhocking to the feelings of every benevolent mind, as it is offenſive in the eyes of the Almighty Ruler of the univerſe.

Finally, fellow citizens! as you value your own peace and that of your families; the quiet and ſecurity of our country; the obligations of our holy religion; and the favor of an over ruling Providence; let us entreat you to enter into the conſideration of the ſubjects now ſubmitted to you. Aſſiſt in mitigating the preſent ills of perſonal ſlavery, by an amelioration of the ſituation of ſlaves; lay the foundation for an eventual extinction of the mighty evil throughout our land; commence a determined oppoſition to the wicked infractions of juſtice and the laws of our country; and may the Divine bleſſing attend you, in every attempt that you may be encouraged to make, for the good of your fellow men.

George Williams was appointed to aſſiſt the Secretary in examining the minutes, in order to report at next ſitting any buſineſs which may appear to be unfiniſhed.

Adjourned to four o'clock this afternoon.

June fixth,—4 *o'clock*, P. M.

The Convention met.

Preſent:

Richard Hartſhorne, *Preſident.*

Adrian Hageman,	Walter Franklin,
Nehemiah Allen,	Samuel Bettle,
Daniel D. Waters,	George Williams,
Thomas Clement,	John Vaughan,
Robert Smith, junior,	Cyrus Newlin,
Thomas Harriſon,	John R. Fairlamb,
James Milnor,	Othniel Alſop.

Report being made that the only unfiniſhed buſineſs which appeared on the minutes, was the propoſed addreſs to the reſpective Abolition Societies; and an eſſay being produced, it was twice read, conſidered by paragraphs, and with ſome alterations agreed to as follows:—

To the Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

THE ſeventh Convention of Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States, now addreſs you on the ſubject of their appointment. The concord and reciprocity of ſentiment which have attended our proceedings, will, we truſt, have a happy influence on the cauſe in which we are engaged, and aid in advancing the great intereſts of humanity and freedom.

The work which we have undertaken is not of a light and trivial nature. It is, on the contrary, one of the utmoſt magnitude and importance. To remove the foul blot which now ſtains our country, to break the chains with which ſo many of our degraded fellow creatures are fettered, and to qualify them for the ſtation for which a beneficent Creator deſigned them, are labours requiring the vigorous efforts,—the unremitting and perſevering endeavours of every friend to mankind throughout the world. We, therefore, earneſtly entreat that the cauſe may not be ſuffered to ſlumber in your hands, but that every favorable opportunity may be *eagerly* embraced of promoting the work of gradual emancipation.

The ſubject of the education of the blacks has claimed a ſhare of our conſideration. It is an object of ſo much intereſt that we cannot too often bring it into view. To adopt the language of the Convention of 1795, " when we have reſtored the " African to the enjoyment of his rights, the great " work of juſtice and benevolence is not accom- " pliſhed—The new born citizen muſt receive that " inſtruction and thoſe powerful impreſſions of " moral and religious truth which will render him " capable and deſirous of fulfilling the various " duties he owes to himſelf and to his country." On this point we particularly refer you to the ſentiments ſo forcibly expreſſed in the addreſſes of preceding conventions, and we ſtrenuouſly urge a ſtrict compliance with the recommendations therein contained.

The great increaſe of the practice of kidnapping, in defiance of every principle of moral and legal obligation, induces us preſſingly to recommend the moſt earneſt endeavours to root out the enormous

evil. In this inſtance there will be leſs to combat than on the general principle; the ſlave holders themſelves being intereſted in preventing this addition to the many calamities inflicted on the unfortunate blacks.

With feelings of ſorrow and regret, we learn that the horrid trade to Africa for ſlaves is ſtill continued by many of our fellow citizens. The hearts of thoſe who can contemplate this ſubject without emotion muſt indeed be deſtitute of every ſentiment of tenderneſs. It ſeems ſcarcely poſſible that men accuſtomed to the enjoyment of liberty, and partaking of the bleſſings of a free government ſhould ſo far diſregard the rights of humanity as to engage in ſo diabolical a commerce. The fact however, incredible as it may ſeem, certainly exiſts and to a very alarming extent, particularly in the eaſtern ſtates; we wiſh to arouſe your zeal on the occaſion and to incite your diligence and activity in carrying into rigorous execution the laws of the ſtates and of the general government againſt ſuch atrocious offenders.

The ſeveral Societies having expreſſed themſelves favorable to the adoption of a conſtitution for the government of future conventions, we have made it a ſubject of our deliberations and being of opinion that the meaſure would be attended with conſiderable advantages we have agreed on a plan which we ſhall forward to you. The proviſions of this inſtrument you will obſerve are of as general a nature as its objects would admit, and we hope it will prove acceptable to our conſtituents. If its preſent form ſhould be approved you will be aware of the neceſſity of its ſpeedy ratification. From the difficulty of framing a work of this kind, and accommodating it to the wiſhes and ſentiments

of every individual, it is hoped that verbal criticisms and alterations of an unimportant nature will be avoided; this point however we submit to your prudent consideration and decision. Should you think proper to adopt it we request your aid in establishing the contemplated fund.

As numerous misrepresentations of the views of our institutions have gone abroad, and as the unhappy attempt at insurrection on the part of some of the blacks in the southern states, has been called in aid of these misrepresentations by the enemies of liberty, and lessened the activity of some of its friends, we have judged it prudent to publish an address to our fellow citizens, copies whereof will be transmitted to you; you will observe from a perusal of its contents that its object is also to bear our testimony, and produce individual exertion against the abominable practice of kidnapping and the cruel trade to Africa, which, as before observed, still disgrace our country. We anticipate the satisfaction of your approval of this measure, and invite your assistance by every means in your power, in giving it general circulation.

We have had our attention drawn to a subject, believed by our predecessors to be of considerable importance to the work of emancipation; the project of forming a history of slavery in the United States. With a view of forwarding this design, we have appointed a committee to examine and arrange the various papers and documents heretofore received by the several Conventions; to prepare an analysis of their contents, and to report the same with such other information as they may be enabled to obtain, to the ensuing Convention. We request you to examine the minutes and addresses heretofore transmitted, for the purpose of

aſcertaining how far the requiſitions of former Conventions have been complied with on your part, and if any information connected with the object in view remains to be afforded, a benefit will ariſe from its ſpeedy communication to the committee, and if individuals friendly to the cauſe, be poſſeſſed of any important documents relating to this ſubject, the committee will no doubt make a proper uſe of any information with which they may be favored.

It appearing that a change of the time of meeting in Convention, would be more generally convenient, we have concluded that the next meeting ſhall be held on the ſecond Monday in January, 1803.

Reſolved, That the above addreſs be ſigned by the Preſident, atteſted by the Secretary, and copies forwarded to the ſeveral ſocieties throughout the United States.

Reſolved, That James Milnor, Samuel Bettle, Walter Franklin, George Williams, and Othniel Alſop be a committee to ſuperintend the publication of the minutes, addreſſes, and form of Conſtitution of this Convention, to tranſmit the ſame to the different Societies; and to give them at leaſt three months notice of the time of meeting of the next Convention.

Reſolved, That fifteen hundred copies of the proceedings of the Convention be printed, and diſtributed amongſt the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States.

And that fifteen copies of the minutes of each of the ſeveral Conventions, be bound together, and diſtributed in the ſame manner.

Reſolved, That five thouſand copies of the addreſs to the people of the United States be printed and ſent to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, to be diſtributed in ſuch manner as they may direct.

Reſolved, That the thanks of this Convention be preſented to the Common Council of the city of Philadelphia, for the uſe of their Chamber, during the preſent ſitting.

ADJOURNED SINE DIE.

Publiſhed by order of the Convention.

OTHNIEL ALSOP, *Secretary.*

Philadelphia, June 6th. 1801.

APPENDIX.

BY an act of the Legiſlature of the State of New-York, paſſed the eighth of April, 1801, it is enacted:—

That every negro, mulatto or meſtee, within the ſtate, who at the time of the paſſing the act was a ſlave for life, ſhall continue ſuch, unleſs manumitted according to law. The baptizing of any ſlave, ſhall not be deemed to be a manumiſſion of ſuch ſlave.

Slaves under fifty years of age may be manumitted by the owners of them, on obtaining a certificate from the Overſeers of the Poor of the city or town where ſuch owner reſides, or the major part of them, or if in the cities of New-York or Albany, by the Mayor and Recorder of the ſaid cities reſpectively, that ſuch ſlaves appear to be under the age of fifty years, and of ſufficient ability to provide for themſelves, and having ſuch certificate regiſtered in the office of the Clerk of ſuch city or town, ſuch certificate or the regiſtry thereof, ſhall be concluſive evidence of the facts therein contained and forever exonerate the owners and their repreſentatives from the maintenance of ſuch ſlaves; ſlaves may be manumitted in like manner by will. In caſe of the refuſal of the Overſeers or of the Mayor and Recorder to grant ſuch certificate, the owner may apply to the Court of the General Seſſions of the Peace, who are authorized to grant the certificate.

Or they may be manumitted at any age by laſt will or otherwiſe, but the owners and their repre-

ſentatives, unleſs ſuch certificate as aforeſaid be obtained, ſhall reſpectively be liable for their maintenance.

All manumiſſions of ſlaves, made before the ninth of March one thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-eight, although not in ſtrict conformity to the ſtatutes then in force relating to ſuch manumiſſions, ſhall be valid from the time the ſame were made, but the owners of ſlaves ſo manumitted and their repreſentatives ſhall be liable for the maintenance of ſuch ſlaves, in caſe of their becoming chargeable.

No ſlave to be brought into the ſtate by any perſon not intending to reſide permanently therein, nor unleſs he ſhall have reſided without the ſtate and have owned ſuch ſlave at leaſt during one year preceding his bringing in, and every perſon importing or bringing any ſuch ſlave, ſhall within one year thereafter, make oath or affirmation before a Magiſtrate of the above facts, and a certificate ſigned by the ſaid Magiſtrate of ſuch oath or affirmation, ſhall, within one month after the making thereof, be filed in the office of the Clerk of the city or county wherein the perſon importing ſuch ſlave ſhall reſide, and if any perſon ſhall bring or import any ſlave contrary to the intent and meaning of the act, or being permitted by the ſame to import or bring ſuch ſlave into the ſtate, ſhall neglect to make ſuch oath, and file ſuch certificate, then every ſuch ſlave ſhall be free.

Any perſon who ſhall ſell as a ſlave or tranſfer for any period whatever, any perſon who ſhall, after paſſing of the act, be imported or brought into the ſtate as a ſlave, and the factor or agent making ſuch ſale or tranſfer, ſhall be deemed guilty of a public offence, and forfeit the ſum of two hundred and fifty dollars, to be recovered with coſts of ſuit,

one half to the Treaſurer of the ſtate for the uſe of the people, and the other half to the perſons ſuing for the ſame, and every perſon ſo imported and ſold, ſhall be free.

Any perſon exporting or attempting to export any ſlave or ſervant born of a ſlave, and made free by virtue of the act, to any place without the ſtate, except as is therein after provided, and every perſon aiding or conſenting thereto ſhall be deemed guilty of a public offence, and forfeit the ſum of two hundred and fifty dollars, to be recovered and paid in the manner above mentioned, and the ſlave or ſervant ſo exported or attempted to be exported, ſhall be free.

Any perſon, not an inhabitant, who ſhall be travelling to or from, or paſſing throughthe ſtate, may bring with him any ſlave and take ſuch ſlave with him from the ſtate, and any inhabitant of the ſtate going a journey to any other part of the United States, may take any ſuch ſlave or ſervant as aforeſaid, but ſuch inhabitant ſhall bring back every ſuch ſlave or ſervant, and in default thereof, ſhall be deemed to have committed a public offence and to have incurred the forfeiture laſt aforeſaid, unleſs he or ſhe ſhall within ſix months after his or her return make proof to the ſatisfaction of a Judge, Mayor, or Recorder of the city or county wherein he or ſhe ſhall reſide, that ſuch ſlave or ſervant could not be brought back by reaſon of ſome unavoidable accident, and unleſs a certificate of ſuch proof, ſigned by the Magiſtrate, ſhall be forthwith filed in the office of the Clerk of the city or town in which ſuch inhabitant ſhall reſide; and every perſon who ſhall have reſided one year within the ſtate, and ſhall be about to remove permanently therefrom, may carry with

him every ſuch ſlave as ſhall have been his proper-ty during one year then next preceding, provided that ſatisfactory proof be made before the proper Magiſtrate of the above circumſtances, and a licence be obtained to carry ſuch ſlave out of the ſtate, and every maſter of a veſſel receiving any ſlave, for the purpoſe of carrying him out of the ſtate without ſuch licence as aforeſaid, ſhall be deemed guilty of a public offence, and forfeit the ſum of two hundred and fifty dollars for every ſlave ſo received, to be recovered and paid in the manner above mentioned.

Every child born of a ſlave within the ſtate, after the fourth day of July in the year of our Lord one thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-nine, ſhall be free, but ſhall remain the ſervant of the owner of his or her mother, and the executors or adminiſtrators of ſuch owner in the ſame manner as if bound to ſervice by the Overſeers of the Poor, and ſhall continue in ſuch ſervice if a male until the age of twenty-eight years, if a female until the age of twenty-five years.

Every inhabitant entitled to the ſervice of a child born after the ſaid fourth day of July, ſhall within nine months after the birth of ſuch child, cauſe to be delivered to the Clerk of the city or town whereof he ſhall be an inhabitant, a certificate in writing of his name and addition, and the name, age and ſex of the child, which certificate ſhall be recorded, and the record thereof be good evidence of the age of the child, the neglect to deliver ſuch certificate within nine months, ſhall incur a forfeiture of five dollars, and the further ſum of one dollar for every month of ſuch neglect.

The perſon entitled to the ſervice of any child born as aforeſaid, may within one year after its birth, elect to abandon his right, on filing a notification thereof with the Clerk of the city or town in which he ſhall reſide, but muſt maintain ſuch child until it arrive to the age of one year, and thereafter it ſhall be conſidered as a pauper, and liable to be maintained and bound out by the Overſeers of the Poor; the omiſſion to notify ſuch abandonment, ſhall be conſidered as an election to retain the ſervice of the child and render its maſter liable for its maintenance, until the period to which its ſervitude is limited as aforeſaid.

All perſons heretofore manumitted by the ſtate, and formerly the ſlaves of perſons whoſe eſtates have been confiſcated or forfeited, and were ſlaves at the time of ſuch confiſcation or forfeiture, and then and ſince reſided and ſtill reſide within the ſtate, and are unable to ſupport themſelves, ſhall be maintained as paupers by the Overſeers of the Poor of the proper city or town, at the expence of the ſtate.

Any perſon permiting his ſlave or ſervant to beg of others victuals or other neceſſaries, ſhall forfeit twenty-five dollars for every ſuch offence, one half to be paid to the proſecutor and the reſidue to the Overſeers of the Poor.

If any perſon ſhall by fraud or colluſion ſell or pretend to ſell or diſpoſe of any aged or infirm ſlave to any perſon unable to maintain ſuch ſlave, he ſhall forfeit the ſum of fifty dollars for each offence and ſhall be deemed the owner of ſuch ſlave and ſuch ſale or diſpoſition ſhall be void.

Any perſon employing, harbouring, concealing or entertaining any ſlave or ſervant knowing him

to belong to any other perſon, without the conſent of the owner, ſhall forfeit to ſuch owner the ſum of twelve dollars and fifty-cents for every twenty-four hours, and in that proportion for a greater or leſs time not exceeding the value of the ſlave or of the ſervice of the ſervant, and any perſon guilty of harbouring, entertaining or concealing, or aſſiſting to convey away any ſlave or ſervant, who ſhall be loſt or die, ſhall forfeit to the owner the value of the ſlave or of the ſervice of the ſervant.

Any perſon trading or traficking with a ſlave or ſervant, either in buying or ſelling without the conſent of the owner, maſter or miſtreſs, ſhall for every offence forfeit treble the value of the article ſo bought or ſold, and alſo the ſum of twelve dollars and fifty cents to the owner of the ſlave or ſervant, and every contract ſo made with ſuch ſlave or ſervant ſhall be void.

Any perſon ſelling rum or other ſtrong liquor to any ſlave or ſervant without the conſent of his owner, maſter or miſtreſs, ſhall forfeit for every ſuch offence the ſum of five dollars, to be recovered in the name of the owner, and one half thereof ſhall be paid to the Overſeers of the Poor.

If any perſon ſhall by theft or treſpaſs committed by a ſlave or ſervant ſuſtain damage to the value of twelve dollars and fifty cents or under, the owner, maſter or miſtreſs of the ſlave or ſervant ſhall be liable to make ſatisfaction for the ſame to the party injured.

Any ſlave ſtriking a white perſon may, on proof of the ſame by the oath of ſuch perſon, be committed by a Juſtice of the Peace, and be tried and puniſhed as in the caſes of petit larceny, but in all other caſes ſhall have the privilege of trial by Jury.

No ſlave ſhall be a witneſs in any caſe except for or againſt another ſlave in criminal caſes.

Where any ſlave ſhall hereafter be convicted of any crime not puniſhable with death or impriſonment in the ſtate priſon for life, his maſter or miſtreſs may cauſe him to be tranſported out of the ſtate, provided that the Court before which ſuch conviction may be had, ſhall previouſly certify that the crime is of ſuch a nature, that tranſportation would be a proper puniſhment and that the court may alſo inflict ſuch other puniſhment as from the nature of the offence and the courſe of the law they may judge proper.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE EIGHTH

Convention of Delegates

FROM THE

ABOLITION SOCIETIES

Eſtabliſhed in different Parts of the United States,

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE TENTH DAY OF JANUARY, ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND THREE, AND CONTINUED BY ADJOURNMENT UNTIL THE FOURTEENTH DAY OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.

Philadelphia:

PRINTED BY ZACHARIAH POULSON, JUNIOR,
No. 106 *Cheſnut-ſtreet.*

1803.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE EIGHTH

Convention of Delegates.

January tenth, 1803.

THIS being the day appointed for the meeting of the Convention of Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States,—a number of repreſentatives attended in the chamber of the Select Council,—when it appeared, from the credentials produced, that the New-York Society had appointed Matthew Franklin, Joſeph Conſtant, Henry Poſt, jr. George Newbold, and Chriſtopher M. Slocum.

The New-Jerſey Society,—Richard Hartſhorne, Clement Hall, Amos Cooper, Gerſhom Craft, Joſiah Reeve, William Newbold, and John Griſcom.

The Pennſylvania Society,—George Williams, James Milnor, Samuel Bettle, Walter Franklin, George Vaux, Samuel Powel Griffitts, and Thomas P. Cope.

The Delaware Society,—Cæſar Auguſtus Rodney, James Brian, and Edward Gilpin.—

Of whom the following were preſent, viz.

Joſeph Conſtant, Henry Poſt, junior, George Newbold, Chriſtopher M. Slocum,	From *New-York.*
Clement Hall, Joſiah Reeve, John Griſcom, Gerſham Craft, Amos Cooper,	*New-Jerſey.*
George Williams, James Milnor, Walter Franklin, Thomas P. Cope,	*Pennſylvania.*
James Bryan,	*Delaware.*

It being ſuggeſted that there probably would be a more numerous repreſentation to-morrow, it was agreed to adjourn till ten o'clock to-morrow morning.

January eleventh, 1803.

Convention met purſuant to adjournment,

Preſent:—

Joſeph Conſtant,	Amos Cooper,
Henry Poſt, junior,	George Williams,
George Newbold,	James Milnor,
Chriſtopher M. Slocum,	Walter Franklin,
Clement Hall,	George Vaux,
Gerſham Craft,	Thomas P. Cope,
Joſiah Reeve,	James Brian.
John Griſcom,	

The Convention proceeded to the choice of a Preſident and Secretary, when Walter Franklin was duly elected Preſident, and Henry Poſt, junior, Secretary.

John Raſield was appointed Door-keeper.

The following communications from the Societies of New-York, New-Jerſey, Pennſylvania and Delaware were preſented and read.—

Report of " The New-York Society for promoting the manumission of Slaves, and protecting such of them as have been or may be liberated."

To the Convention of Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States, to be held at Philadelphia, on the ſecond Monday of January next.

WE have received with much ſatisfaction the account of the proceedings of the laſt Convention of Delegates, and have beſtowed an early and ſerious attention on the ſeveral objects recommended in their Circular Addreſs.

Deeply impreſſed with the juſtice and magnitude of the cauſe in which we have been ſo long engaged, we ſhall not relax our efforts until they are crowned with complete ſucceſs. Conſcious of the purity and rectitude of our motives, we ſhall purſue, with unabated zeal, the path of our duty, uninfluenced by the cenſures or miſrepreſentations of the intereſted and prejudiced foes of our aſſociation; convinced that while we continue by all lawful and proper means to promote the gradual emancipation of the unhappy race of Africans who are enſlaved amongſt us, and to raiſe them to an equal participation of the rights and benefits of political Society, we ſhall receive the

approbation of the enlightened and ſincere friends to the happineſs of mankind.

Early ſenſible of the neceſſity of imparting uſeful knowledge to the free blacks, that they may be induced to improve, and not to abuſe, the advantages of their new condition, we have been unceaſingly attentive to the means of their education.

It is now about fifteen years ſince the firſt inſtitution of the African free School in this city. From a ſmall beginning it has gradually progreſſed to its preſent flouriſhing and reſpectable ſtate. It conſiſts of about one hundred and thirty children of both ſexes, who are taught reading, writing and arithmetic, and the females are further inſtructed in needle work and knitting. Already in various inſtances have the happy effects of this eſtabliſhment been manifeſted in the ſuperior good conduct of thoſe who have enjoyed the benefits of inſtruction which it has afforded.

A ſlight acquaintance with the ſprings of human action, is ſufficient to convince us, that whatever tends to expand and elevate the mind, to excite and cheriſh a love of reputation, and a due regard to the opinion of mankind, muſt be favorable to the growth and preſervation of thoſe virtuous habits, which engrafted on ſound religious principles form the ſureſt barrier againſt the encroachments of vice. Many among the free blacks as among the whites, whoſe education has been alike neglected, are incorrigibly vicious and depraved. And we ought not to be diſcouraged or ſurprized, even if the number of bad characters among the former ſhould exceed thoſe to be found among the latter. Nor does it become us to ſtigmatise or reproach the blacks, for vices which are chiefly produced by that ſtate to which our injuſtice has reduced them. We ought rather to re-

double our exertions to repair the wrongs we have inflicted on them, and remove as far as poſſible all the evil conſequences of Slavery.

Three other Schools have been for ſome time opened in this city for the inſtruction of people of color, the teachers in which receive a compenſation from thoſe who ſend their children. This is a further proof of their growing ſenſe of the advantages of Education.

The increaſe of the number of free-holders among the free blacks is an evidence of the progreſs of induſtry, ſobriety, and economy, and ſtrengthens the hope, that they will gradually emerge from their degraded condition, to uſefulneſs and reſpectability.

The deteſtable practice of kidnapping, which violates every principle of morality and law, through the exertions of the Society has been diminiſhed, and no efforts will be wanting on our part, effectually to deſtroy a practice, which outrages all the rights and feelings of humanity.

Our attention has lately been called to a new mode of removing blacks from this ſtate, by perſons from the ſouthern ſtates, who claim them under the fugitive act. Theſe claims where they were unfounded or doubtful, or attended with circumſtances of peculiar hardſhip and oppreſſion, have in ſeveral inſtances, been defeated, by the interpoſition of the Society.

That many of our Citizens ſhould be ſo deaf to the voice of reaſon and humanity, ſo regardleſs of the laws of their country, and of public opinion, as to engage in the Slave Trade, is indeed, matter of aſtoniſhment and regret. We feel it moſt ſtrongly our duty, and it is the duty of every friend to virtue and his country, to uſe every means to detect and bring to puniſhment theſe ſhameleſs and unprincipled

offenders. In two or three cases where there were strong suspicions that the vessels were intended to trade in slaves, the owners, by the application of the Society, were obliged to give bonds as prescribed by the act of the United States. In one instance the vessel was libelled, but the Court decided against the libellants, though such proof of the intention of the defendant came out on the trial, that the Attorney of the district entered an appeal.

No alteration has been made, in the laws of this state respecting slavery, since our last report. By the operation of the law as it now stands, slavery in a few years will wholly disappear from New-York. By the late census there were found to be fifteen thousand six hundred and two slaves, and about eight thousand free blacks in this state.

As the most effectual mode of disseminating the Address of the Convention to the Citizens of the United States, we have caused it to be published in our News-papers, and we hope it may make those salutary impressions on the minds of the people which it was intended to produce.

We have deliberately considered the plan of a Constitution for the Convention which has been proposed, and have agreed to ratify it. By our Delegates we shall transmit two hundred dollars towards establishing the intended fund.

We have recurred to the addresses and requisitions of former Conventions, and find that we have given all the attention in our power to the different objects recommended to our notice. In the reports we have made, and the documents accompanying them, will be found all the information which this Society is able to communicate, in aid of the proposed history of Slavery in the United States. Should, however, any thing hereafter occur as worthy the attention of

the compiler, it ſhall be tranſmitted to the committee appointed for that purpoſe.

The names of the officers of this Society at preſent are,—Willet Seaman, Preſident; James Robertſon, Firſt Vice-Preſident; Samuel Bowne, Second Vice-Preſident; Eliſha W. King, Secretary; Henry Poſt, junior, Aſſiſtant Secretary; John Murray, junior, Treaſurer; Willet Hicks, Regiſter; Adrian Hegeman, Chairman of the Standing Committee; Matthew Franklin, Secretary; Samuel Bowne, Chairman of the Board of Truſtees of the School, Andrew Cock, Secretary; Alexander Hamilton, Peter Jay Munro, Daniel D. Tompkins, and Peter A. Jay, Counſellors; Robert Bowne, Chairman of the Committee of Correſpondence, and George Newbold, Secretary.

The following perſons have been elected to repreſent this Society in the enſuing Convention, viz.—Matthew Franklin, Joſeph Conſtant, George Newbold, Henry Poſt, junior, and Chriſtopher M. Slocum.—

Willet Seaman, President.

ATTEST,—

Elisha W. King, Sec'y.

To the Convention of Delegates from the different Abolition Societies in the United States to be held at Philadelphia, in the Firſt month, (January,) next enſuing.

CORDIALLY diſpoſed to co-operate in any meaſure which may contribute to the furtherance of the great object for which we have aſſociated, and believing that annual Conventions compoſed of Dele-

gates from various parts of the Union, may be eminently productive of good, we have appointed Richard Hartshorne, Clement Hall, Amos Cooper, Gershom Craft, Josiah Reeve, William Newbold, and John Griscom our representatives to the next Convention.

The expediency of annual Conventions being thus admitted, the necessity of some form of a Constitution for their government, in our estimation follows of course:—We have therefore, as far as it respects ourselves, fully ratified the Constitution agreed to by the last Convention; we have likewise concurred in the propriety of establishing a Fund to be at the disposal of that body, and have authorized our Delegates to draw upon the Treasurer for one hundred dollars, which they are to present as our contribution thereto, provided the proposed constitution be generally approved and carried into effect.

Although the work of emancipation within our borders has not very conspicuously advanced since our last report, yet exertions have been made in different parts of the State, and there is reason to conclude that the clouds of prejudice are gradually yielding to the light of reason, and the impulses of humanity. Animated by this prospect, we were encouraged to believe, that it would be seasonable again to address our Legislative Body, and have accordingly prepared a memorial to be presented at the next session.

A number of cases of negroes claiming their freedom are now under care of the acting committees; some of them very important; in behalf of which, several suits have been commenced, and are now pending, and one case has recently terminated favourably, by which a woman and five children have been set free.

A Society has lately been eſtabliſhed at Trenton, under the denomination of the "Trenton aſſociation for promoting the Abolition of Slavery;" ſaid Society by requeſt, has been admitted as a conſtituent branch of this; an occurence which we contemplate with peculiar ſatisfaction, and cannot but hope that very important advantages will reſult from it. Its central ſituation at the ſeat of government, and eſpecially its contiguity to that part of the State where the aid of ſuch inſtitutions is moſt needed, we apprehend juſtify the expectations we have formed.

The printed copies forwarded to this ſociety of the Convention's addreſs to the Citizens of the United States, have been carefully diſtributed, and the inſertion of it in ſeveral of the News-papers of this State, obtained by requeſt of the Society.

Fully concurring in the ſentiments expreſſed by the Convention on the ſubject of the education of the blacks, we ſhould be glad was it in our power to ſay that the intereſting work was in a proſperous ſituation: but although it is a matter which we have much at heart, difficulties of many kinds conſpire to impede its progreſs; yet we have been gratified in perceiving ſome encouraging proofs of the good effects of individual exertions in this line in various neighbourhoods.

It is lamentable indeed, that the diabolical practice of kidnapping, ſhould find any adherents, and we are ſorry to find that even in this ſtate, ſome daring attempts of the kind have been diſcovered. In one inſtance where a number of blacks were forced away and carried into the ſtate of Georgia; meaſures have been taken to bring the perpetrators to juſtice: and in another in which a perſon from a neighbouring ſtate, by arts of diſſimulation had nearly accompliſhed his purpoſe of evading the law, and carrying off

ſeveral blacks: the ſcheme was happily fruſtrated by the timely interference of ſeveral ſpirited individuals, members of this ſociety.

No inſtance has come to our knowledge of any in this ſtate being concerned in that ſhocking commerce,—the trade to Africa for ſlaves:—ſhould there be any, we truſt we ſhall not be wanting in vigilance to ſearch out and deteƈt them.

That part of the addreſs which relates to the proječt of forming a hiſtory of ſlavery in the United States was given in charge to a Committee, who were to colleƈt and prepare ſuch materials as it might be in their power to obtain; nothing however has yet been reported by them.

We conclude with deſires that a full repreſentation of the different Abolition Societies may take place at the approaching Convention, and that its labours may be crowned with unanimity and uſefulneſs.

Signed on behalf of a General Meeting of "The New-Jerſey Society for promoting the gradual Abolition of Slavery," held at Burlington the ſixth day of the Ninth month 1802,—by

Robert Smith, junior, Sec'y.

To the Convention of Delegates from the ſeveral Societies inſtituted for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

ANXIOUS that nothing may be wanting, which depends upon this Society to promote the great work of the emancipation of the African race, we have appointed George Williams, James Milnor, Sa-

muel Bettle, Walter Franklin, George Vaux, Samuel Powel Griffitts, and Thomas P. Cope to repreſent us in the Convention of Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies to be held in this city on the tenth inſtant, and we earneſtly wiſh that the labours of theſe aſſociations may, eventually be productive of ſucceſs; but that which is of the firſt magnitude in our view, is to qualify thoſe who are releaſed from bondage, (and eſpecially the younger part of them) to become really good and uſefulcitizens; this deſirable object has called for, and recived the unremitted attention of this Society.

To prevent the diſgraceful and inhuman practice of kidnapping, (which it appears from ſeveral attempts lately detected, is carried to a conſiderable extent,) we have committees under appointment, who, we believe, maintain a due attention to their duties, but we deem it proper that this ſubject ſhould be preſented to your view, as claiming the moſt active vigilance of every advocate for the cauſe of juſtice, and the welfare of ſociety.

The cauſes heretofore mentioned as depending in our courts, relative to the unlawful traffick in ſlaves, are alſo under the care of a committee, but remain yet undecided.

We have nothing new to communicate concerning the free people of color; there continue to be many inſtances of exemplary conduct among them, tho' we do not apprehend that on the whole there is much improvement in their moral conduct ſince laſt account; reſpecting the education of their youth, no material alteration has taken place, but two of our deceaſed friends have left us by will liberal benefactions, one of them having bequeathed one thouſand pounds and the other one thouſand dollars, which, when received, will enable us conſiderably to extend the benefits of our preſent eſtabliſhments.

We have agreed to the Conſtitution deſigned for the government of future Conventions, and propoſe an amendment which our Delegates will communicate. If the conſtitution ſhould be generally adopted, this Society will cheerfully contribute ſuch proportion of the funds which may be wanted as ſhall appear juſt.

Annexed is a liſt of the preſent officers of the Society, and of the members who have been choſen ſince laſt report.

Benjamin Rush, President.

ATTEST,—

Timothy Paxson, } Secretaries.
John Bacon, }

Philadelphia, Firſt month 3*d.* 1803.

Preſent Officers of the Pennſylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery:—

President,
Doctor Benjamin Ruſh.

Vice-Presidents,
Thomas Parker and Robert Patterſon.

Secretaries,
Timothy Paxſon and John Bacon.

Counsellors,

William Rawle,
William Lewis,
John Hallowell,
Walter Franklin,
James Milnor,
Joſeph Hopkinſon,
Joſeph Hemphill,
John R. Coates,
Daniel Smith,
George Fiſher,
George Vaux.

Electing Committee,

Joſeph Moore,	Iſaac Pearſon,
Daniel Thomas,	Joſeph Price,
Thomas Harriſon,	Thomas Rogers,
Solomon White,	Samuel Smith,
Benjamin Kite,	Samuel Bettle,
Joſeph Budd,	William Maſter.

Members elected since last report,

Joſiah White of Philadelphia,
Joſeph Wright, ditto.
Ephraim Haines, ditto.
Samuel F. Bradford, ditto.
Joſhua Longstreth, ditto.
Richard Wevill, ditto.
Benjamin Williams, ditto.
Joſeph Trimble, jr. Delaware county,
John Meredith, ditto.
Matthias Llewellyn of Philadelphia,
Ebenezar Clark, ditto.
John Dorſey, ditto.
Alexander Shaw, ditto.
John M. Smith, ditto.
George Vaux, ditto.
Jeremiah Warder, junior, ditto.
Henry Dean, ditto.
Benjamin Marſhall, ditto.
John Sergeant, ditto.
James Robinſon, junior, ditto.
Benjamin Rowland Montgomery county,
Thomas Marſhall Delaware county.

The following extract accompanied the above report

AT an adjourned meeting of the Pennſylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, held the Fourth month 12th. 1802,

RESOLVED,

That it be recommended to the Convention to be held in the Firſt month next, to add a third ſection to the fourth article of the Conſtitution, in the following words, viz.

III. Copies of the proceedings of every meeting of the Convention ſhall be ſent to the different Societies, as ſoon as convenient after its riſing.

Extracted from the minutes,

John Bacon, Sec'y.

Philadelphia, Firſt month 8th. 1803.

To the convention of Delegates from the different Abolition Societies propoſed to be held in the city of Philadelphia on the tenth day of the firſt month, 1803.

The Delaware Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery report,

THAT, concurring with the propriety of holding annual Conventions, as a mean of ſtrengthening the great object of our aſſociation, we appoint Cæſar A Rodney, James Brian, and Edward Gilpin, to repreſent us in the Convention of Delegates next to be holden.

Since the laſt report of this Society to the Convention, they have maintained the object of their aſſociation without much viſible change in circumſtance or diſpoſition. The general temper of opinion of the opulent in this ſtate, is either oppoſed to the generous principle of emancipation to the people of color, or indifferent to the ſucceſs of the work: hence the majority of members in our ſmall ſociety are men confined to buſineſs, and our active members are

often ſtraitened for time to fulfil their appointments.

The ſociety have two ſuits now depending at New-Caſtle, in which they hope the iſſue will be favorable to the cauſe of humanity; but the attornies in the oppoſition make ſuch ſubtle conſtructions of our laws, the laws themſelves being unfavorable, and the prevailing diſpoſition of juries unfriendly to our cauſe, are ſuch, that they baffle many hopeful caſes.

There appears to have been twenty-one ſlaves manumitted ſince laſt report, through the agency of the ſociety, but not any liberated by legal proceſs.

We have reaſon to believe that the nefarious trade of kidnapping and ſending away ſlaves, contrary to law, is yet ſhamefully practiſed in this ſtate; and even in caſes of very glaring preſumption of ſuch facts, we have been unable to obtain evidence that would be admitted in court, and obliged to abandon the cauſe.

The ſociety have no ſchool eſtabliſhed for the education of children and people of color; ſome attention, however, is paid thereto by one of our members, who teaches on the firſt day of the week, gratis, and ſome progreſs is made among his pupils. A plan, nevertheleſs, hath been in agitation with us for the better educating people of color, which, if carried into effect, will, we hope, be productive of happy conſequences.

No periodical diſcourſes have yet been eſtabliſhed.

One addreſs to the public on the ſubject of ſlavery, hath been prepared, approved by the ſociety, and publiſhed.

We have unity with the propoſal of the Convention in eſtabliſhing a general fund to be under their

direction; and are ſenſible of its utility in ſupporting our aſſociation, but at preſent are unable to contribute to its eſtabliſhment.

The ſociety have not yet publiſhed the laws of this ſtate relating to people of color, as was expected in our laſt report.

A petition to the Legiſlature of this ſtate interceding for the relief and protection of people of color, is now in circulation; it is expected numerous ſignatures will be obtained thereto, and hopes are entertained that it will meet with a more favourable reception than like petitions heretofore.

On the 17th. of the Seventh month laſt, the propoſed conſtitution for the government of future Conventions was adopted by this ſociety without alteration.

A committee of this ſociety ſtands appointed for collecting ſuch materials as may contribute towards compiling of an hiſtory of ſlavery, as propoſed to be collected by the Convention; they have not yet reported.

Signed by order,

Cyrus Newlin, President.
Zachariah Jeſs, Secretary.

Wilmington, Twelfth-month 11th. 1802.

Reſolved, That the foregoing communications be referred to Joſeph Conſtant, George Newbold, John Griſcom, Thomas P. Cope, and James Brian, to examine the ſame and report to the Convention what objects will be proper to engage their attention during the preſent ſeſſion.

The committee appointed by the laſt Convention to examine the papers belonging to them, and to

frame an analyſis of their contents, made report as follows:—

THE committee appointed by the laſt Convention to examine the papers belonging to them, and to report an analyſis of their Contents,—Report,

THAT they have performed the ſervice aſſigned to them, ſo far as to examine the ſaid papers, to arrange them in proper files, and to make an accurate liſt of the whole ſo framed as materially to facilitate references to them when neceſſary.

The committee, on an inſpection of the papers, were of opinion, that ſhould a perſon be appointed to compoſe a hiſtory of ſlavery it would moſt probably be his deſire to peruſe them carefully himſelf, and it was difficult to form an analyſis ſufficiently accurate and comprehenſive without making it nearly as voluminous as the materials on which it would be grounded. They hope, therefore, that the courſe which they have purſued will be deemed ſatisfactory.

James Milnor,
George Williams,
Walter Franklin.

Philadelphia, Firſt-month tenth 1803.

Reſolved, That the ſaid report be referred to George Newbold, Gerſhom Craft, and James Milnor, who are requeſted to report the moſt eligible mode of effecting the compilation of the propoſed hiſtory.

Adjourned till ten o'clock to-morrow morning.

January twelfth, 1803.

The Convention met purſuant to adjournment.

Preſent·

Joſeph Conſtant,	Thomas P. Cope,
George Newbold,	George Vaux,
Amos Cooper,	James Brian,
Joſiah Reeve,	James Milnor,
John Griſcom,	Walter Franklin,
George Williams,	Henry Poſt, junior.

The Convention were informed that the abſence of Richard Hartſhorne, one of the Delegates of the New-Jerſey Society, was occaſioned by ſickneſs in his family.

The committee appointed to report to the Convention the objects proper to engage their attention, at the preſent ſeſſion, made the following report:—which was ordered to lie on the table.

The committee to whom were referred the ſeveral communications to the Convention, and who were charged to report the objects proper for its deliberation, ſubmit the following:—

That they have examined the addreſſes from the different Societies, and have been much gratified in obſerving the perſevering care to the great object of emancipation, which are manifeſted by thoſe Societies who have forwarded communications to this Convention But they regret that any cauſe ſhould exiſt ſufficiently powerful to have prevented a delegation from ſome ſocieties who were repreſented in former Conventions. To whatever circumſtances this omiſſion may be aſcribed, the fact calls for the ſolid attention, not only of the Convention, but of every friend to the freedom and protection of the blacks throughout the United States. It is by union of

action, and a spirited and zealous co-operation alone, that we can reasonably hope for ultimate success in the great work in which we are engaged. Impressed with this truth, and sensible of the benefits which have resulted from the circular addresses of former Conventions, the committee recommend that similar communications be made by this Convention to the various Societies in the several States, urging them to a more general appointment of Delegates to future Conventions.

The Societies of New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware, have adopted the Constitution for the government of future Conventions, and some of the Delegates, it appears, have it in charge to pay certain sums towards constituting a fund to be at the disposal of the Convention.

Among the many and interesting objects to which this fund may be usefully appropriated, none is perhaps of more immediate utility, than the granting of aid to those societies, who have much to do and are weak handed. Independent of the relief which may be derived from this source, the committee also recommend that, in the contemplated address to the societies, it be proposed to such of them as are materially deficient in pecuniary resources, that on occasions of extraordinary emergency, they call on the more wealthy societies for that support which the pressing nature of the cases may require—and, as to protect the unhappy African in those rights to which the laws of his country may entitle him, is the common wish and the common object of all our exertions, it is to be presumed that when opulent societies may be thus appealed to, by sister associations, they will feel it their duty cheerfully to contribute such aid as the occasion may render proper, and their circumstances will admit, notwithstanding the boon

may be beſtowed on a ſubject without the geographical limits of their ſtate. In whatever portion of the union the unhappy negro drags his galling chain, and pines under the conſuming rigours of fraud, injuſtice and violence, thither our efforts ſhould be directed:—Wherever the greateſt maſs of good can be accompliſhed, there the means ſhould be applied.

It is alſo worthy of conſideration, whether it would not tend to a more full delegation hereafter, if ſome portion of the funds of the Convention were applied to defray the travelling and incidental expences of repreſentatives from diſtant ſocieties, whoſe funds may be inadequate to the expence.

The committee think it might be uſeful to recommend to ſocieties eſtabliſhed in ſtates in which no laws exiſt for the gradual abolition of ſlavery, to uſe their perſevering exertions to effect a deſideratum ſo intereſting to humanity, and in which the welfare of the preſent and future generations in the United States appears to be ſo intimately and deeply involved.

Whether it may be expedient to addreſs the Legiſlature of North Carolina, the committee do not undertake to decide, but it may not be improper to call the attention of the Convention to the ſubject that ſuch order may be taken on it as circumſtances may require.

The proper and judicious culture of the mind, and the diſſemination of uſeful knowledge, being eſſential to fit man for a ſtate of freedom, the committee think the Convention cannot too forcibly impreſs it on the ſocieties to cauſe ſchools to be eſtabliſhed, wherever it is practicable, in which the blacks and people of color may receive uſeful inſtruction. This object

has met with due attention in ſome parts, but in others it appears to be either quite neglected, or in a very languiſhing ſtate. Notwithſtanding the vigilance of the ſocieties, and the repeated notice which former Conventions have taken of it, the committee perceive, with mingled emotions of horror and regret, that the wicked practice of kidnapping, ſo diſgraceful to the perpetrators, and ſo inſulting to every feeling of humanity, ſtill prevails to a moſt lamentable extent: The committee, therefore, recommend, that the ſeveral ſocieties be requeſted to uſe all ſuitable means, to procure from the Legiſlature of the different ſtates, the paſſing of ſuch laws as may effectually reſtrain theſe inhuman proceedings, by expoſing the offenders to exemplary and prompt puniſhment. One of the ſocieties mention a new ſpecies of this kind of violence on the part of perſons who have taken advantage of the proviſions of the fugitive act to found improper claims on the blacks, and thus to drag them from their homes to diſtant parts. This ſubject may very properly be alſo recommended to the careful attention of the ſocieties.

The committee learn, with peculiar ſatisfaction, that a new aſſociation of the friends of the blacks, has lately taken place in Trenton, and that it promiſes to be uſeful to the cauſe,—the example is worthy of imitation even in thoſe ſtates in which abolition ſocieties already exiſt, but more particularly ſo in thoſe in which ſuch aſſociations have as yet, found no place, and where the voice of reaſon and humanity is ſtifled by the laſh of the whip, the clangor of chains, and the cries of the unhappy ſlaves.

It has been obſerved, that in one of the ſocieties, ſome advantages have reſulted to the cauſe of emancipation from the appointment of a ſtanding committee, charged with the ſelection of extracts from works

on the subject of slavery, and the collection of fugitive essays, and to cause them to be published in Newspapers. As this mode of circulating a knowledge of the subject, has met with the approbation of the committee, they suggest, whether it might not be proper to recommend to other societies the appointment of similar committees.

The Pennsylvania society have proposed an addition to the constitution, which the committee, without passing an opinion on it themselves, submit to the consideration of the Convention.

Signed on behalf of the Committee,

Joseph Constant, Chairman.

Convention-room, *First-month* 12*th*. 1803.

The committee appointed on the subject of compiling a history of slavery, made the following report: which was ordered to lie on the table.

Resolved, that a committee be appointed to engage some literary character to compose a history of slavery in the United States; that the said committee give their aid to the person so engaged, in communicating all such information in furtherance of this object, as they may be able to obtain, and give him access to all the documents in the possession of the Convention; that they also have power if they shall approve of the work when completed, to cause it to be published by subscription or otherwise, and that the said committee, in conjunction with the author, superintend the publication of the same; that the said committee be also authorised to agree upon such suitable remuneration to the author as they may think proper, and make report of their proceedings at the next stated annual meeting of the Convention.

Chriſtopher M. Slocum, John Griſcom and James Milnor were appointed a committee to draft an addreſs to the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States.

The Conſtitution, as agreed to by the different Societies, was read, and finally adopted.

The amendment to the Conſtitution propoſed by the Pennſylvania Society, was read, and after deliberate diſcuſſion, was diſagreed to.

Reſolved, That the Convention now proceed to the election of a Preſident, Secretary and Treaſurer, and alſo to the appointment of an acting committee, for one year, agreeably to the conſtitution.

The following perſons were accordingly elected:

Walter Franklin, Preſident.
Henry Poſt, junior, Secretary.
Thomas P. Cope, Treaſurer.

The following perſons were appointed to compoſe the acting committee,—

George Williams,	James Brian,
James Milnor,	and
Joſiah Reeve,	George Vaux.

Reſolved, That ſo much of the report of the committee of arrangement as relates to the granting of aid to ſocieties, who may be deficient in pecuniary reſources, be referred to Joſeph Conſtant, Amos Cooper and George Vaux.

Reſolved, That that part of the ſaid report which ſuggeſts the propriety of recommending to ſocieties eſtabliſhed in ſtates in which no laws exiſt for the gradual abolition of ſlavery, to uſe their endeavours to promote the enacting of ſuch laws, be referred to the committee appointed to draft the addreſs.

Reſolved, That ſo much of ſaid report as relates to addreſſing the Legiſlature of North Carolina be referred to John Griſcom, Gerſhom Craft, and George Williams.

Reſolved, That ſo much of ſaid report, as recommends the eſtabliſhment of ſchools for the education of the blacks, be referred to the committee on the addreſs.

Reſolved, That that part of ſaid report which propoſes that the ſeveral ſocieties uſe their influence in procuring laws to be enacted for the prevention of kidnapping, be referred to the ſame committee.

Reſolved, That ſo much of ſaid report, as relates to the aſſociation at Trenton, be referred to the ſame committee.

Reſolved, That ſo much thereof, as relates to the appointment of ſtanding committees, in the different ſocieties, for the purpoſe of publiſhing extracts from treatiſes and fugitive eſſays on ſlavery, be referred to the ſame committee.

Adjourned till to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

January thirteenth, 1803.

Convention met purſuant to adjournment.

Preſent:—

Walter Franklin, Preſident,

Thomas P. Cope,
Henry Poſt, junior,
Joſeph Conſtant,
Chriſtopher M. Slocum,
George Newbold,
John Griſcom,
Amos Cooper,
Joſiah Reeve,
George Vaux,
Gerſhom Craft,
James Milnor,
James Brian,
George Williams.

The committee appointed to take into consideration that part of the report of the committee of arrangement that relates to granting aid to societies who may be deficient in pecuniary resources, proposed the following resolution—which was ordered to lie on the table.

Whereas the establishment of a permanent Fund has been contemplated, and some contributions have been made thereto: and whereas, in addition to the sum required to defray the necessary expenses of the Convention, much good may be done by affording aid to societies who may be deficient in pecuniary resources: therefore, Resolved, that in the circular address it be earnestly recommended, that wealthy societies contribute as liberally as they can afford to the said fund, and that the acting committee be impowered to grant such aid, when applied for, as the state of the funds will warrant, and they may think proper.

The committee to whom was referred the consideration of the propriety of an address to the Legislature of North Carolina, on the subject of slavery, made report, which was agreed to as follows, *to wit*,

The committee to whom it was referred to take into consideration the propriety of an address to the Legislature of North Carolina, on the subject of Slavery,——REPORT,

That having attended to the subject, and endeavoured to obtain such information as might be useful on the occasion, they learn, with feelings of much regret, that the existing laws of North Carolina, revised and enacted since the revolution, are extremely unfavourable to the emancipation of slaves; prohibiting all manumission, by will or otherwise, unless in cases which the Judges of the county courts, with the concurrence of a jury, shall deem

worthy, by reaſon of ſome ſpecial meritorious ſervices; and that inſtances have occurred where perſons, from a ſenſe of duty, or motives of benevolence, having liberated their ſlaves, without a compliance with this regulation, the objects of manumiſſion have been ſeized by virtue of the laws and again ſold as ſlaves. Notwithſtanding your committee thus find the condition of the blacks in that quarter to be particularly trying and diſtreſsful, and cannot but deeply lament that regulations ſo ſtrongly marked with violence, inhumanity, and, as they believe, a blindneſs to proſpects of perſonal ſafety, ſhould exiſt; yet they are of opinion, that from the ſtate of the public mind in North Carolina, relative to ſlavery, the preſent time would be unpropitious to an application to the Legiſlature of that ſtate, and, therefore they can only propoſe, that the ſubject be impreſſively recommended to the attention of a ſucceeding Convention.

By order of the Committee,

John Griſcom, Chairman.

Convention-room, *Firſt-month* 12*th*. 1803.

The Convention proceeded to the conſideration of the reſolution, laid on the table yeſterday, relative to the propoſed hiſtory of ſlavery, which was adopted, and Thomas P. Cope, James Milnor, and George Vaux were appointed a committee to carry the ſame into effect.

Adjourned till to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

January fourteenth, 1803.

Convention met pursuant to adjournment.

Present:—

Walter Franklin, President,

Joseph Constant,	Thomas P. Cope,
Henry Post, junior,	George Vaux,
Christopher M. Slocum,	James Brian,
John Grifcom,	Amos Cooper,
James Milnor,	Gersham Craft,
George Williams,	Josiah Reeve.

The committee appointed to prepare an address to the several Abolition Societies in the United States, produced an essay, which being read, and considered by paragraphs, was adopted as follows:—

To the ..... Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

It is with lively satisfaction that the eighth Convention of Delegates from different Abolition Societies in the United States, embrace the opportunity of addressing you on the interesting cause, which thus continues to claim our persevering attention, the ultimate success whereof, will, we confidently hope, yield an ample reward for all our labours.

Various and important, in our opinion, are the benefits resulting from thus meeting in annual Conventions. For though we are not invested with legislative influence, yet the opportunity, by this means afforded, for a free interchange of sentiments and communion of feelings, gives energy to action and animation to those who, from multiplied difficulties, are almost ready to relinquish the pursuit.

We have with the united consent of our constituents, fully ratified the Constitution which was pre-

ſented for your conſideration, and have appointed officers for the enſuing year.

This organization of the body, will, we earneſtly hope, induce your renewed attention to the nomination of Delegates to the next Convention, and we urge the neceſſity of your deputing thoſe, whom you have reaſon to believe, may be willing to devote an adequate portion of their time and attention to a compliance with the objects of their appointment; we requeſt alſo in an eſpecial manner that you will not fail, regularly to forward written communications from your ſocieties.

Several ſocieties have inſtructed their repreſentatives to pay certain ſums towards the formation of a general fund, from which, if it continue to accumulate, as we hope it will, much good may be expected to our common cauſe, particularly in furniſhing aid to thoſe ſocieties who are deficient in pecuniary reſources.

In the promotion of the laudable purpoſes to which this fund, may be thus applied, we truſt our friends in ſeveral of the Eaſtern States, whoſe domeſtic exertions have become almoſt unneceſſary by the diſappearance of ſlavery from amongſt them, will feel a lively intereſt;—we, therefore, earneſtly ſolicit their peculiar attention to the ſubject, perſuaded they will feel, in a conſciouſneſs of having done well, and in a view of the uſeful reſult of their beneficence, an ample reward. We are aware of the varied difficulty and oppoſition that attend the interference of ſome ſocieties in this benevolent undertaking. But we ſincerely hope they may not be overcome by any diſcouragements, and we requeſt that they may continue to meet at regular periods, to preſerve the form of their aſſociation, embracing every opportunity that may occur for uſeful exertions.

As the general eſtabliſhment of a legiſlative plan, for the gradual abolition of ſlavery throughout the United States, is a deſideratum highly intereſting to humanity, we cannot but preſs all thoſe ſocieties which exiſt in ſtates, where no ſuch legal proviſions are in force, to make every proper exertion, in promoting the enaction of a law to this effect.

Much has been ſaid by former Conventions on the ſubject of ſchools, and the vaſt importance of cultivating the minds and the morals of the blacks; no doubt difficulties of various kinds ariſe in many places to the attainment of this eſſential point, yet the happy effects abundantly conſpicuous in divers neighbourhoods, on a perſevering attention to this object, furniſh great encouragement to unrelaxed exertion, and we ſincerely hope that you may not diminiſh in zeal, for the promotion of this benevolent, this conſiſtent work. We learn with particular pleaſure, that the ſtate of Schools for the African race, is, in ſeveral places, flouriſhing and progreſſive; and that in others, much good has been done therein, by the laudable and diſintereſted exertions of individuals; ſuch inſtances of dedication demand the acknowledgment of our unfeigned approbation.

We perceive, with emotions of horror and regret, that the diabolical practice of kidnapping, notwithſtanding the vigilance of ſocieties and recommendations of former Conventions, prevails in many places to a lamentable extent. We are alſo informed that a new ſpecies of this wicked outrage on the feelings of humanity is purſued by the perpetrators taking advantage of the proviſions of the fugitive act to lay unfounded claims on the blacks, and thus, under colour of the law, to drag them into ſlavery. We recommend you to urge every ſuitable means to procure ſuch modifications of your laws as they may need to fit them for holding out efficient and prompt re-

ſtraints againſt thoſe wicked proceedings, and for bringing the offenders to exemplary puniſhment.

We are informed by the reports from New-Jerſey, that a new ſociety has been eſtabliſhed at Trenton, forming a conſtituent branch of the general ſociety of that ſtate. This has afforded us peculiar ſatisfaction; it promiſes to be materially uſeful to the cauſe, and we recommend the example as worthy of your eſpecial notice, and ſo far as you deem it practicable of your example.

In one of the ſocieties from which we have had communications, a ſtanding committee has been appointed, who are charged with the ſelection and publication of ſuch extracts, eſſays and fugitive pieces relative to ſlavery, as they apprehend may give currency to the ſubject and revive in the minds of our fellow citizens, from time to time a few reflections on the condition of thoſe who ſtill wear the galling chains, deprived of one of the deareſt privileges of our nature. We highly approve of this mode of circulating a knowledge of the ſubject, and recommend it to the imitation of all, who are not in a ſimilar practice.

The committee appointed by the laſt Convention to arrange the papers and documents relative to the formation of a hiſtory of ſlavery in the United States, and to produce an analyſis of their contents, produced a report, from which we have judged it right to nominate three of our members in Philadelphia to engage ſome ſuitable literary character to undertake the work, and to have it publiſhed under the care, and ſuperintendance of the committee; ſhould you be in poſſeſſion of any documents or other important information on the ſubject, we requeſt you will forward them free of expence and with all convenient diſpatch to the ſaid committee, in order that they may be uſed as circumſtances may render neceſſary.

The circuitous trade to Africa we have reaſon to believe, ſtill continues to be carried on, particularly from many ports in the Eaſtern States, and although ſeveral of the attempts which have been made to puniſh infractions of the laws of the United Sates on this ſubject, have not reſulted in the wiſhed for event, nevertheleſs, we invite your vigilant and perſevering oppoſition to this diſgraceful traffic, and attention to the diſcovery and proſecution of offenders, and we are willing to hope that though a partial perverſion of the public ſentiment, and the cupidity of intereſted individuals, may for a time, preſent conſiderable diſcouragement, yet that the virtuous exertions of the friends of the human race, will at laſt be bleſſed with the merited ſucceſs.

To conclude, fellow labourers, we believe the magnitude of the work in which we are engaged is by no means leſſened, and that the alarming and direful conſequences attendant in various quarters, on this unchriſtian and inhuman uſurpation of power, call for our united vigilance, and redoubled exertions, in contributing our ſhare towards the eradication of this evil ſo portentous to our land.

The Bond required by the Conſtitution to be given by the Treaſurer, to the Preſident of the Convention, was read, approved of, and directed to be depoſited in the hands of the Preſident.

Reſolved, That the circular addreſs be ſigned by the Preſident, atteſted by the Secretary, and copies forwarded by the acting committee to the different ſocieties in the United States.

Reſolved, That the acting committee preſent the thanks of this Convention to the Preſident of the Select Council of Philadelphia for the uſe of their chamber.

Reſolved, That ſix hundred copies of the minutes of the Convention be printed, and tranſmitted by the acting committee to the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States.

Adjourned sine die.

Publiſhed by order of the Convention,

Henry Post, junr. Sec'y.

January 14th. 1803.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE NINTH

American Convention

FOR PROMOTING THE

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

AND

IMPROVING THE CONDITION

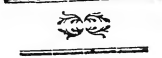
OF THE

AFRICAN RACE:

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE NINTH DAY OF JANUARY, ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND FOUR, AND CONTINUED BY ADJOURNMENTS UNTIL THE THIRTEENTH DAY OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.



PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY SOLOMON W. CONRAD.

1804.

Minutes

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE NINTH

AMERICAN CONVENTION

FOR PROMOTING THE

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY, &c.

SELECT COUNCIL CHAMBER.

Philadelphia, January 9th, 1804.

THIS being the day appointed for the meeting of the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the Condition of the African Race,---a number of delegates attended, when the credentials from the different Societies were produced, and it appeared that the following persons were appointed members of this Convention, viz.

New-York-----John Murray, jun.
William T. Slocum,
Abraham Skelton,
William Franklin,
John Coffin,
Samuel Miller,
Matthew Franklin.

New-Jersey---Richard Hartshorne,
Robert Smith, jun.

Gershom Craft,
John Griscom,
Amos Cooper,
Thomas Redman,
William Newbold.

Pennsylvania---Thomas P. Cope,
James Todd,
James Milnor,
Othniel Alsop,
George Williams,
William Jones.

Delaware-----Doctor John Vaughan,
Joseph Bringhurst, jun.

Of whom were present.---William Franklin, John Coffin, Matthew Franklin, Richard Hartshorne, Robert Smith, jun. John Griscom, Amos Cooper, William Newbold, Thomas P. Cope, James Todd, James Milnor, Othniel Alsop, George Williams, John Vaughan, Joseph Bringhurst, jun.

The convention then proceeded to the choice of officers, when the following persons were duly elected:

PRESIDENT----MATTHEW FRANKLIN,
SECRETARY---OTHNIEL ALSOP,
TREASURER---THOMAS P. COPE.

John Rafield was appointed door-keeper.

The following communications from the Societies of New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, were read:

REPORT of the "New-York Society for promoting the Manumission of Slaves, and protecting such of them as have been, or may be liberated,"

To the Convention of Delegates, from the several Abolition Societies in the United States, to be held at Philadelphia, on the 9th day of January, 1804.

WE have received the circular address of the last Convention, and paid due attention to the matters recommended to our consideration.

Since our last report, nothing has occurred of such interest or importance as to merit being particularly stated to the Convention.

The Society have, in several instances, been successful in procuring freedom to blacks unlawfully held in slavery; and the standing committee, whose peculiar duty it is to attend to such cases, continue their exertions, with unabated zeal.

The Free School, established by the Society, remains in a flourishing state. Above one hundred children receive instruction under the teachers supported by the Society.

We have been pleased to learn the adoption of the Constitution of the Convention; and we shall not cease our endeavours to carry into effect its recommendations, and to co-operate with our sister Societies in the great work in which we are engaged, until it is crowned with complete success.

The officers of this society, at present, are,

Samuel L. Mitchell, President; James Robertson, Vice-President; Henry Post, junior, Secretary; C. M. Slocum, Assistant Secretary;

John Murray, jun. Treasurer; Matthew Franklin, Register; Adrian Hegeman, Chairman of the Standing Committee; John L. Bowne, Secretary; Matthew Franklin, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the School; Andrew Cock, Secretary; Alexander Hamilton, Peter Jay Munro, William Johnson, D. D. Tompkins, Counsellors; Robert Bowne, Chairman, and Joseph Constant, Secretary of the Committee of Correspondence.

The following persons are appointed to represent this Society in the Convention, viz.---John Murray, jun. William T. Slocum, Abraham Skelton, William Franklin, John Coffin, Samuel Miller, and Matthew Franklin.

By order of the Society,

JAMES ROBERTSON,
VICE-PRESIDENT.

ATTEST,
HENRY POST, JUN. SECRETARY,

To the Convention of Delegates from the different Abolition Societies in the United States, to be held at Philadelphia, in the First Month (January) 1804.

THE proportion of printed copies of the minutes of the last Convention, forwarded for the use of this society, have been duly received and distributed.

The interesting contents of the Convention's pertinent address to the several Abolition Societies, obtained our special regard; and, we trust, its benevolent aim will not be altogether ineffectual in

stimulating to renewed exertions to advance the desirable objects for which these Societies were instituted.

The labours of this Society, since last year, do not appear to have diminished. The Acting Committees in the several counties have been industriously engaged in the prosecution of claims for freedom, whenever cases have presented, and, in several instances, have been successful; by which means five persons who had been illegally detained in servitude have been relieved or liberated. A variety of cases of claimants for freedom is in the hands of the Acting Committees.

The suit to which we alluded in our last year's report, against certain persons concerned in the transportation of Negroes from the neighbourhood of Elizabeth Town in this state, to Georgia, finally resulted in the acquittal of those persons, under cover of that clause in our slave-law, which grants to persons removing from one state to another, the privilege of taking with them their slaves.

Sometime in the course of last Spring, one Reuben Pitcher put into Egg-Harbour in a small sloop, (of which he was owner) for the purpose of refitting. It was discovered that he had several blacks on board, and circumstances appearing which induced a belief that he was concerned in the negro trade, information was immediately transmitted to the Acting Committee of Burlington county; and, in their name, the vessel was seized and the Negroes taken into custody. The depositions of Captain Nicholas Bowker in Pitcher's employ, and of Captain Cornelius Clark, who became possessed of the secret, were taken, which being produced at the trial, the vessel was thereupon condemned. It

appeared however, that soon after the seizure was made, Pitcher, who in his character combines considerable artifice and cunning, with the utmost rascality, managed his part so as to engage several persons in his interest, by whose assistance he procured the vessel to be appraised at about 70 dollars, a sum much under her value, and obtaining surety for this amount, made his escape with the vessel. The amount of the appraisement, therefore, is all that was obtained, excepting the liberation of the Negroes. In the course of the examination it appeared, that this vessel was fitted out at Martha's Vineyard, and that the Negroes were by various stratagems taken on board at Boston; that she was bound to the state of Georgia, where Pitcher designed to dispose of his cargo, after recruiting at various stopping places which he had in view along the coast. It likewise appeared that this was not the first instance of his participation in this vile commerce, and that it is but a link in a systematic scheme of kidnapping, carried on by different agents along the sea coast, from New-Hampshire to Georgia.

The memorial on the subject of Slavery, presented last year by this Society to our state legislature, was, at the instance of the Society, again called into view, at their late session; in consequence, leave was given to bring in a bill, which was ordered to be printed, and lies over for consideration to the next sitting. The principal provision which it contains, limits the term of servitude for boys at twenty-five, and girls at twenty-one, of all born after a certain period. There appeared a very flattering disposition in a majority of the members, and great hopes are entertained that it will eventually be crowned with success: but even should this hope be fallacious, we are assured that good

effects will ensue from the application, as every thing which promotes investigation on this subject, must operate, in degree, to disperse the mists of prejudice, and expose the odious nature of this national evil.

The ordinary distinctions in society are often vague, and imply no just pre-eminence: rank and titles are adventitious things, and instead of designating merit or virtue, are frequently the baubles of imbecility, or the sparkling decorations of meretricious pageantry: power too, is often unjustly acquired, and no evidence of right; and although it is acknowledged there are certain nice discriminations and shades of character, which mark different tribes and nations of mankind, it has never appeared demonstrable to the eye of reason and philosophy, that a black skin is any proof of inferiority. Virtue and real worth are the only safe criterions of excellence, and before we adjudge the prize to either claimant, we must first place them in all respects upon an equal footing. But that this equality, so essential to the growth of virtue and mental excellence, becomes annihilated by the influence of personal slavery, no one acquainted with the history of man, will ever deny. It was well observed by Homer, who lived when slavery was common, and whose knowledge of the human heart, no person who understands him will ever call in question, that "When a man is made a slave, he loses from that day, the half of his virtue." Longinus affirms, "That slavery, however mild, may still be called the prison of the soul, and a public dungeon;" and Tacitus remarks, "That even wild animals lose their spirit when deprived of their freedom." Banish from the human breast, hope and the sense of honour, (and what sense of honour, or

what hope can an enslaved pagan retain !) and you banish at the same time the noblest incentives to virtue. Hence the immense importance of our endeavouring, by all rational means, to repair the devastations which slavery and its train of evils have made upon the human character in the persons of our African brethren, and perhaps nothing within our power, can so effectually forward this great work, as the promotion of schools for their benefit: we therefore not only concur in the sentiments expressed by the last and former conventions on this head, but are free to express our solicitude that they may increasingly engage the attention of Abolition Societies. The subject has been again deliberated on by this Society, and referred to a Committee for more particular investigation, who are requested to make report at next meeting.

We have appointed Richard Hartshorne, Robert Smith, Junr. Gershom Craft, John Griscom, Amos Cooper, Thomas Redman and William Newbold, to represent this Society in the Convention.

Signed in behalf, and by order of the New-Jersey Society for promoting the gradual Abolition of Slavery, Twelfth Month (December) 20th, 1803.

WILLIAM GRIFFITH, *President.*

Attest,
ROBERT SMITH, Junr. *Sec'ry.*

Officers of the Society chosen ninth month, 1803.

PRESIDENT,
WILLIAM GRIFFITH.

VICE-PRESIDENTS,
RICHARD HARTSHORNE,
GERSHOM CRAFT.

SECRETARY,
ROBERT SMITH, JUN.

TREASURER,
WILLIAM COXE, JUN.

ATTEST,
ROBERT SMITH, Junr. *Sec'ry.*

To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the Condition of the African Race.

ALTHOUGH we have but little to communicate, yet continuing desirous to aid the labours of the Convention, we have appointed Thomas P. Cope, James Todd, James Milnor, Othniel Alsop, George Williams and William Jones, to represent us in the meeting of that body to be held on the ninth instant. And although the indifference and dislike to the universal extension of the blessings of freedom, manifested by some of our fellow citizens, would tend to excite a degree of discouragement, yet we feel a hope that the day is approaching when the rights and priveleges of men, will be as fully enjoyed by our brethren of African descent, within the limits of the United States, as by any other class of society. Prospects such as these contribute to encourage to the continuance of our labours on their behalf, and of our endeavours to diffuse among them the important benefits of school education. The institutions for this purpose heretofore reported, are still maintained; and it is with particular satisfaction we notice that this subject is recommended by the last Convention, to the different branches of their constituents.

We concur with the Convention in the propriety of having a standing Committee, charged with the

selection and publication of suitable extracts, essays and fugitive pieces relative to slavery, and have therefore placed the subject under the care of our Committee of Correspondence.

With regard to the history of slavery, mentioned in your last address, we do not know of any additional papers or documents which would be useful in its compilation: should such however be met with, we shall take due care to hand them to the Committee as requested by you.

The courts held in this state not having yet decided on the cases of unlawful traffic in slaves, reported in our last communication, we are not prepared to offer any thing new on the subject, nor are we able at this time, to give any further information relative to the kidnapping of free blacks, though there is great reason to fear the detestable practice is still carried on in some places.

When we reflect on the great number of slaves in the southern parts of the United States, and consider how much their sorrrows have been multiplied, we can scarcely entertain a doubt, but that every enlightened mind will unite with us in a desire for the promotion of measures, which will alleviate the rigors of bondage, and prepare the sufferers under it for emancipation. May we then brethren cheerfully continue our exertions, cherishing a fervent, though humble hope, that they will, in due time, be rendered more extensively availing, than at any period heretofore.

Signed by order and on behalf of the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

THOMAS PARKER, *Vice President.*

ATTEST,

JOHN BACON, *Sec'ry.*

Philadelphia, First month 7th, 1804.

The following persons were chosen officers of the Society for the present year.

PRESIDENT,

DOCTOR BENJAMIN RUSH.

VICE PRESIDENTS,

ROBERT PATTERSON,
THOMAS PARKER.

SECRETARIES,

TIMOTHY PAXSON,
JOHN BACON.

TREASURER,

JOHN EVANS.

COUNSELLORS,

William Lewis,	Joseph Hemphill,
William Rawle,	Daniel Smith,
John Hallowell,	George Fisher,
Walter Franklin,	George Vaux,
James Milnor,	David Irvine.
Joseph Hopkinson,	

ELECTING COMMITTEE,

Joseph Moore,	Joseph Price,
Daniel Thomas,	Thomas Rogers,
Thomas Harrison,	William Masters,
Solomon White,	William Jones,
Joseph Budd,	Samuel Bettle,
Isaac Pearson,	Samuel Smith.

To the Convention of Delegates from the Abolition Societies in the United States, to be held in the city of Philadelphia, on the ninth day of January, instant----The Delaware Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, report,

THAT fully persuaded of the advantages arising from an annual Convention of delegates from

Abolition Societies, as a point at which may centre the united experience of our fellow labourers, in the work of emancipation of the people of colour, we have appointed Dr. John Vaughan, and Joseph Bringhurst, Jun. to present this our report, and to represent us in general Convention, at the ensuing session.

Since our last report we have gained some strength, as well in addition to the members of our society, as to the more general countenance and active support of our fellow citizens. While however we rejoice that this good principle is gaining ground, we still have to lament that too many inhabitants of our state, are either unfriendly to the Abolition of Slavery, or so indifferent as to feel but small interest therein.

One of the suits depending at the time of our last report, has been brought to trial, and terminated unfavourably to the Society: the other yet remains on the docket. Another suit has been commenced.

Twelve slaves have been liberated since last report, through the agency of the society. Among many strong presumptive cases of kidnapping, and transporting of people of colour from this state, we have at length been able fully to detect one instance; the sufferer was regained, and the offenders brought to justice: by this result the society has received a small fund, which it is hoped will be of material service in the prosecution of its object. At the last session of our legislature, a bill was presented for the abolition of slavery, and twice read; it was then postponed for further consideration at the next session. We have a committee of three members appointed to attend the present session of the legislature, for the purpose of using their exertions for

the enacting a similar bill into a law: we have some hopes of success. Be the event what it may, we are determined to persevere in this desirable object, until right and justice shall finally prevail.

The society has not yet published the laws of this state relating to people of colour.

A committee stands appointed for the purpose of collecting such facts as may be useful in forming a history of the progress and consequences of slavery in the United States; but we have not yet received its report.

The present officers of our society are,

PRESIDENT,
ISAAC DIXON.

VICE-PRESIDENT,
ALLEN M'LANE.

SECRETARY,
ZACHARIAH JESS.

TREASURER,
EDWARD GILPIN.

ACTING COMMITTEE,
Nathan Sharpless,
Vincent Hewes,
John Test,
John Warner.

Isaac Stevenson, *Recorder.*

Signed by order of the Abolition Society of Delaware, at Wilmington this seventh day of January, 1804.

ISAAC DIXON. *President.*
ZACHARIAH JESS, *Sec'ry.*

Resolved, that the preceding communications be referred to William Franklin, John Griscom, Thomas P. Cope, and Joseph Bringhurst, jun. to con-

sider and report thereon; together with such other objects as they may deem proper to come under the notice of this Convention.

Adjourned till to-morrow evening, at 6 o'clock.

January 10th,

Convention met, pursuant to adjournment;

PRESENT:---

MATTHEW FRANKLIN, PRESIDENT.

William Franklin,	James Todd,
John Coffin,	James Milnor,
Richard Hartshorne,	George Williams,
Robert Smith, jun.	William Jones,
John Griscom,	John Vaughan,
Amos Cooper,	Joseph Bringhurst, jun.
William Newbold,	Othniel Alsop.
Thomas P. Cope,	

The Committee to whom were referred the communications from the several Societies, made report as follows:

The Committee appointed to digest and arrange the Objects proper for the attention of the Convention---Report,

THAT, on examining the addresses from the several Societies, they cannot but regret that from some Societies, who formerly sent respectable delegations to the Convention, no communications or representations have this year been received; and that in some of the addresses, which have been presented, there is less detailed information than is desirable.

The Committee are much gratified in discovering that the school for the tuition of the blacks in New-York, is represented to be in a flourishing condition. This subject is of sufficient importance to gain the renewed attention of the Convention; and the Committee believe it would be proper, that, in the circular address of the present year, it be recommended to such societies as have it not in their power, from the scantiness of their funds, or other circumstances, to employ regular tutors, to form private associations of their own members or other well disposed individuals, for the purpose of instructing the people of colour, in the most useful and simple branches of education; especially on the first day of the week, which there is too much reason to believe, is, by the ignorant blacks, frequently devoted to dissipation, to the very great injury of their own morals, and the well-being of society.

At the same time that the Committee fully appreciate the importance of a lettered education of the blacks, they earnestly recommend it to the Convention, to impress the societies with the necessity of carefully watching over the religious and moral instruction of that unhappy race. They should be led from those habits of idleness, profligacy, and improvidence, consequent on slavery, into paths of sobriety and industry. Perhaps it would be useful occasionally to convene them, in order to afford suitable opportunities to impress their minds, with the necessity of their acting as becomes men, escaped from bondage, and on whose correct conduct must, in some measure, depend the liberation of their brethren, and the good treatment of such as remain in slavery. The latter should be taught obedience to their masters, and to bear with pati-

ence and fortitude, the tasks allotted them, waiting with manly resignation for the coming of that day, in which liberty shall be proclaimed to the captive.

We believe also, that it would be advisable to revive the addresses of former Conventions to the blacks, with such alterations and additions as may be best adapted to the views and particular situations of the several societies.

The advantages which have resulted from the addresses of former Conventions to the societies, are so obvious and manifold, that the Committee, without further remark, recommend the adoption of it at the present time; and as some persons are impressed with a belief, that considerable benefit would be likely to accrue from the possession of permanent officers, whose qualifications and places of residence would render them at all times serviceable to the cause; it is submitted, whether it would be proper to recommend to the societies, such an alteration of the constitution, as will make any member of any of the Abolition Societies, eligible to the office of President, Treasurer, or Secretary to the Convention.

The Committee cannot refrain from expressing their gratification in witnessing the donations which have been made by some of the societies---So much good may be expected from the establishment of a permanent fund, to be at the disposal of the Convention, that other societies, or individuals, who are in a capacity to afford it, will, we trust, be encouraged to follow the laudable example.

We find, on a recurrence to the minutes, that it was referred to this Convention to determine on the propriety of an address to the legislature of

North Carolina. The Committee being unable to determine on the expediency of that measure, have concluded to bring it again into view, that the Convention may take such order on the subject as they may judge proper.

Having attentively perused the address of the Convention of 1801, to the people of the United States, and concurred in its contents, the committee believe it would be useful to republish it, with such alterations and additions as a suitable consideration of the subject may dictate. It cannot be improper to vindicate our conduct to the world, to make an open and manly declaration of our motives, and to evince a firm and unshaken attachment to the justice and humanity of our cause. It cannot be doubted that our views are mistaken, our efforts condemned, and unfounded prejudices harboured against us, by some well disposed individuals in the community, and which we are apprehensive have been increased by ill-advised and intemperate proceedings on the part of some well-meaning but over zealous members of some of the societies. We mean not by these observations to discourage the efforts of any, but while we condemn the practice of slave-holders, we should be careful not to give unnecessary trouble or offence to them, but to temper our zeal with prudence and knowledge.

With this view, we apprehend it would be seasonable and salutary to recommend to the different societies, to be cautious in the selection of their Acting Committees; to fill them with discreet men, in order that no useless umbrage may be given to our opponents, nor suits undertaken with too much precipitation, which for want of this prudent line of conduct, have sometimes ended in injury to

the prosecutors, and been attended with heavy expence.

We further suggest whether it would not advance the great end we have at heart, to make it the duty of the Acting Committee, to open and maintain a correspondence with some of the leading friends to abolition in Baltimore, Richmond, and Alexandria, to encourage them to revive the spirit and form of their associations; and if they cannot send forward delegations to the succeeding Convention, at least to inform us of their situation, in order that the Convention may, if practicable, afford them some encouragement under their difficulties. With this subject, may be combined a further authority to the said committee, to correspond with some respectable and influential friends to the blacks in the Carolinas and Georgia, for the purpose of obtaining such information from time to time, respecting the condition of slavery in those states, as may enable them to judge of the expediency of recommending the establishment of Abolition Societies among them; and if such establishment should be found practicable, to afford the members suitable information, as to the best form of organizing themselves, by transmitting them copies of the minutes of our proceedings, and of the constitutions of the other associations in Philadelphia and elsewhere.

It is also proposed to the consideration of the Convention, whether it would not be proper to recommend to the societies who have not chosen Standing Committees, charged with the publication of extracts and fugitive pieces relating to slavery, to adopt the measure; and where such Committees exist, to impress them with the necessity of an habitual attention to the subject.

The subject of kidnapping cannot be too frequently or too earnestly recommended to the vigilance and attention of the societies, until that most abominable outrage on the feelings of humanity, shall be done away from our disgraced country. The Committee notice, with painful emotions, the prevalence of this enormous evil; and that several instances of it have occurred since the meeting of the last Convention. We therefore submit, whether it would not be well to recommend to the societies to furnish accurate accounts of the several cases which may come under their notice, and to detail with precision such of them as may be attended with particular circumstances of atrocity. We believe it would be proper that these cases should be made public by the respective societies.

To devise some eligible plan for the gradual and effectual abolition of slavery, and to provide for the security and comfortable accommodation of the blacks, when emancipated, are objects of primary importance: whether the accomplishment of them can be best attained by colonization, or whether this is the proper moment for the Convention to take up the subjects, must be left to the serious consideration of the members. The Committee judged the subject of sufficient moment to recommend it to the Convention without expressing any further opinion on the occasion.

To conclude, we confidently hope that all will feel and acknowledge the absolute necessity of a constant, indefatigable, and unchangeable perseverance in the great objects of our association, persuaded that our honest endeavours, however opposed by interest and avarice, must finally prevail. We know that we have the aid and concurrent support of some of the wisest and best men of our age, not only in Europe but America.

On motion, resolved, that William Franklin, John Griscom, Thomas P. Cope, and Joseph Bringhurst, jun. be a committee to prepare and report the form of an address to the several Abolition Societies in the United States.

Resolved, That so much of the report of the Committee of Arrangement as relates to the education, and moral and religious instruction of the blacks, be referred to the Committee on the address.

Resolved, that the subject of reviving the addresses of former Conventions to the free blacks, with such alterations and additions, as may be proper, be committed to Richard Hartshorne and George Williams.

Resolved, That so much of the said report as relates to altering the constitution in such manner as to render any member of either of the Abolition Societies, eligible to the office of President, Treasurer, or Secretary to the Convention, be referred to James Milnor, William Newbold, John Coffin, and John Vaughan.

Resolved, That so much of the said report as relates to the funds of the Convention, be referred to the Committee on the circular address.

Resolved, That William Jones, Amos Cooper, and James Milnor be appointed to deliberate further on the propriety of an address to the legislature of North Carolina, and to prepare an essay, should they concur in the expediency of such a measure.

Resolved, That so much of the report as relates to the republication of the address of 1801 to the people of the United States, with such alterations

and additions as a suitable consideration of the subject may dictate, be referred to Robert Smith, jun. John Vaughan, and James Todd, with liberty, should they deem it most advisable, to prepare an entire new address.

Resolved, That that part which relates to a recommendation of caution in individuals of the several societies in their efforts on behalf of the blacks, be referred to the committee on the circular address.

So much of the report as relates to the Acting Committee hereafter to be appointed, is postponed for further deliberation at a future sitting.

Resolved, That so much of the said report as recommends to such societies as have not appointed Standing Committees to publish extracts and fugitive pieces, to give attention to the subject, be referred to the committee on the circular address.

Resolved, That so much as relates to the subject of kidnapping, be referred to the same committee.

Resolved, That so much as relates to the formation of some eligible plan for the gradual and effectual abolition of slavery, &c. be postponed for further attention.——

Adjourned till to-morrow afternoon at half past two o'clock.

January 11*th*,

Convention met, pursuant to adjournment;

PRESENT:—

MATTHEW FRANKLIN, PRESIDENT.

William Franklin,
John Coffin,
Richard Hartshorne,
Robert Smith, jun.
John Griscom,
Amos Cooper,
William Newbold,
Thomas P. Cope,
James Todd,
James Milnor,
George Williams,
William Jones,
John Vaughan,
Joseph Bringhurst, jun.
Othniel Alsop.

An essay of an address to the free blacks and people of colour, prepared by the committee appointed for the purpose, being produced, was read, and on motion,

Ordered to lie on the table.

The committee on the subject of amending the Constitution, submitted the following resolution, which was read and ordered to lie on the table.

Resolved, That it is inexpedient to alter the Constitution in the manner suggested by the Committee of Arrangement.

The committee to prepare an address to the people of the United States, reported progress and were continued.

The committtee on the subject of an address to the legislature of North Carolina made the following report, which was ordered to lie on the table.

The Committee to whom was referred the subject of a memorial to the Legislature of North Carolina, have had the same under consideration, and having paid such attention thereto as was in their power, beg leave to report,

THAT in their opinion it would, at this time, be inexpedient to offer an address. They believe that public opinion in that state, is exceedingly hostile to the abolition of slavery, that every attempt towards the emancipation of people of colour is regarded with an indignant and jealous eye; that at present, the inhabitants of that state consider the preservation of their lives, and all they hold dear on earth, as depending on the continuance of slavery; and are even riveting more firmly the fetters of oppression----That no language the Convention could use, would have the smallest tendency to promote a relaxation of that rigorous severity, which the great body of the citizens believe necessary to preserve them from insurrection and massacre. Of these facts, some of the committee have personal knowledge, and notwithstanding there are in that as well as in the other southern states, a number of humane individuals, who sincerely deprecate the cruelty of those laws which not only tolerate the traffic in human flesh, but prohibit the feeling master from manumitting his slave; yet from a consideration of the fate that respectful addresses to the legislature on this subject, have heretofore met with, as well as from other information possessed by the Committee, they believe that great difficulty would attend even the presentation of an address, and that if presented it would not be read. The committee however beg leave to recommend, that this

subject be still kept in view, and that the Committee appointed to draft an address to the people of the United States, be instructed to insert therein, a paragraph expressive of the deep regret felt by the Convention, that laws, so inconsistent with our republican forms of government, so derogatory to the character of men professing christianity, and so destructive to human happiness, should, through mistaken policy, be continued in force, to the disgrace of our common country.

On again adverting to that part of the report of the Committee of Arrangement which relates to the Acting Committee, it was

Resolved, That it be the duty of the Acting Committee, to open and maintain a correspondence with some of the leading friends to abolition, in Baltimore, Richmond, and Alexandria: to encourage them to revive the spirit and form of their associations, and if they cannot send forward delegations to the succeeding Convention, at least to inform us of their situation, in order that the Convention may, if practicable, afford them some encouragement under their difficulties: and that it be further recommended to said Committee, to correspond with some respectable and influential friends to the blacks, in the southern states, for the purpose of obtaining such information from time to time, respecting the condition of slavery in those states, as may enable them to judge of the expediency of establishing Abolition Societies among them: and if such establishment should be found practicable, the said Committee is requested to afford the members suitable information, as to the best form of organizing themselves, by forwarding them copies of the minutes of our proceedings,

and of the Constitutions of the Abolition Societies already instituted.

The following resolutions were moved and seconded, and ordered to lie on the table.

The present Convention continuing firmly impressed with the unlawfulness and injustice of slavery, and the necessity of a persevering diligence in every lawful endeavour, on the part of the friends of humanity, to eradicate the evil from our land; and believing that many persons decline an open support of the cause of abolition, from a persuasion that the object is unattainable without endangering the safety and most important interests of the southern states, a sentiment in the opinion of this Convention fallacious and unfounded, and believing further, that the formation of a plan for the gradual emancipation of blacks, for their improvement and security when made free, and for preventing any injurious effects to the community, from the measure, would be likely to prove highly useful—

Resolved, That a committee of eight members be appointed for the above purposes, and that they report the result of their deliberation to the next Convention.

Resolved, That the Acting Committee be requested to institute a correspondence with the friends of abolition in the eastern states, on the subject of slavery in general, intreating them to maintain the spirit and form of Abolition Associations among them, and, in a particular manner, to afford their best exertions in bringing to punishment, such persons as they may discover to be concerned in the unlawful traffic in human beings.

The following reports were read and ordered to be inserted on the minutes.

The Committee appointed by the last Convention to engage some literary character to compose a history of slavery in the United States, respectfully report,

THAT they have prevailed on a gentleman of extensive literature and approved talents, to engage in this important undertaking, which has been commenced, and is in a state of considerable progress: but the completion of the work will necessarily be delayed until the author can obtain more documents than are in possession of the committee, and much information which the papers of the Convention do not supply.

THOMAS P. COPE,
JAMES MILNOR.

January 11th, 1804.

The Acting Committee report,

That agreeably to the order of the Convention, they revised and examined the minutes of the last year, caused six hundred copies of the same to be printed, and transmitted them, as also the circular address of the Convention, in suitable proportions to the different societies.

The Committee further report, that no applications for pecuniary aid, have been made by any of the societies during the recess, and they have therefore made no drafts on the funds of the Convention.

No communications have been received by the Committee since their appointment.

On behalf of the Committee,

GEORGE WILLIAMS.

The Treasurer Reports,

That since the meeting of the last Convention he has received from the New-York manumission society, two hundred dollars---and from the New-Jersey society one hundred dollars---and that he holds a resolution of the Pennsylvania society, appropriating two hundred dollars to the use of the Convention.

THOMAS P. COPE, Treasurer.

The following resolution was read and adopted, viz.

Resolved, That the Acting Committee be requested to procure a suitable person to transcribe into the book of minutes, such of the proceedings of the Convention as have not been already recorded, and if necessary, to draw upon the Treasurer for the expence.

The essay of an address to the free blacks and people of colour in the United States, was taken up and some time spent in deliberation thereon, when it was, on motion, resolved, that the subject be postponed until our next sitting.——

Adjourned till to-morrow afternoon, at half past two o'clock.

January 12th,

Convention met, pursuant to adjournment;

PRESENT:---

MATTHEW FRANKLIN, PRESIDENT.

William Franklin,
John Coffin,
Richard Hartshorne,
Robert Smith, jun.
John Griscom,
Amos Cooper,
William Newbold,
Thomas P. Cope,
James Todd,
James Milnor,
George Williams,
William Jones,
John Vaughan,
Joseph Bringhurst, jun.
Othniel Alsop.

Abraham Skelton, a delegate from the New-York Society, appeared, and took his seat.

The address to the free blacks and people of colour being again taken up, and considered by paragraphs, was adopted as follows:---

To the free Blacks, and other free People of Colour, in the United States.

THE American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery and improving the Condition of the African Race, believe it proper to address you, on subjects highly interesting to your well being.

You can have no doubt but that our views are disinterested, and we therefore think ourselves entitled to your attention, whilst we speak of matters in which you are greatly concerned.

As you are free men, we wish you to place a proper estimate on your privileges, and to act in

a manner becoming your character; that, by your worthy conduct, you may destroy the prejudices which some persons entertain against you, and relieve your friends from the censures which they incur in consequence of your errors: we beseech you, reflect seriously and endeavour to remove these reproaches; and it is our earnest and affectionate advice, that you remember your great and good Creator, who has placed you in this life, in order that you may, by acting well your part here, be qualified for everlasting happiness hereafter—Can you expect that happiness, if instead of attending places of divine worship, there to pray for his holy aid, you spend the Sabbath, as well as much of the other parts of your time, in frolicking, drinking, or other evil practices, which destroy your own comfort, give cause of offence to your neighbours, and above all greatly displease that all-seeing God, before whom you must appear to give an account for all your conduct? Let us prevail upon you to refrain from the use of spiritous liquors, which have occasioned misery to thousands—from gaming, a vice which will bring poverty upon your families, and from frolicking and amusements, which lead to idleness and expence: these habits of dissipation, can in no wise add to your comfort. Be industrious, diligent in your business, frugal in your expences, and endeavour to lay up part of your earnings against a time of need. Some of you can read, such know the advantages of it; you who cannot, strive to acquire that knowledge.—Surely this knowledge is an object of great importance, were it only for the opportunity it affords of becoming acquainted with that best of books, the Bible. The holy Scriptures of the old and new testament, contain invaluable treasures of instruction, and of comfort. It would give us much satisfaction, could we oftener see them in the hands of

those who are able to read them, and that an increasing anxiety to become possessed of their contents, and to profit by their precepts, might be more and more observable among you.

Very much depends upon the right education of your children, endeavour to have them brought up to labour, and taught to read and write; early place them apprentice with suitable masters, and whether they be tradesmen or farmers, be always particularly careful to prefer such, as by their example, will encourage them in industry and sobriety.

In all your dealings be just and honest, give no cause of offence to any, and if any dispute, either among yourselves, or with others, should unhappily arise, in which you find difficulty, apply to such persons in your neighbourhoods as you know to be your friends, and able to give you advice and assistance. Be assured you will find this practice contribute much more to your peace and interest, than the settling your differences at law.

Be careful to observe your marriage covenants, remembering that those who violate them, will fall under the displeasure of the Almighty. We wish also to impress upon your minds, the necessity of having your marriage ceremonies legally performed, and that the births and deaths in your respective families, be carefully registered. In the words of an address heretofore made, we recommend you at all times, and upon all occasions, to behave yourselves in a civil and respectful manner, by which you may prevent contention and remove many causes of complaint: we beseech you to reflect, that you may, by your good conduct, refute the objections which have been made against you as rational and moral creatures, and lessen many of the diffi-

culties which now occur in the emancipation of such of your brethren, as are yet in bondage.

In all your communications with those of your brethren who remain in slavery, we desire you unceasingly to impress them with the necessity of contentment with their situations, submission to their masters, and fidelity to their interests—that they be not merely eye-servants, but carefully perform the labours assigned them, and manage every thing intrusted to their care, with as much faithfulness as if it were their own. By this conduct they will excite in their masters, a disposition to treat them with humanity and gentleness, and to increase the number of their privileges and comforts; and contribute to the peace of their own minds.

Console them with the reflection, that unmixed happiness in a future life, will be the portion of all good men, whatever may have been their lot here below.

The resolution relative to an amendment of the Constitution, laid on the table yesterday, was now adopted.

The report of the Committee on the subject of an address to the legislature of North Carolina, laid on the table yesterday, being again read, was concurred in.

The consideration of the resolution respecting a plan for the gradual abolition of slavery, &c. was resumed, and after considerable discussion, was adopted.

The following persons were appointed a committee to carry the said resolution into effect, viz.

Matthew Franklin, Abraham Skelton, Thomas P. Cope, James Milnor, John Griscom, William Newbold, John Vaughan, Joseph Bringhurst, jun.

The following resolution was laid on the table:

Resolved, That a Committee be appointed to prepare a memorial to Congress, requesting them to take into their serious consideration, the utility and propriety of inserting, in the regulations about to be established for the government of the territory of Louisiana, a prohibition of the importation of slaves into that territory.

Adjourned till half past seven o'clock this evening.

January 12th,---Half past Seven o'clock, P. M.

Convention met.

PRESENT:---

MATTHEW FRANKLIN, PRESIDENT.

Abraham Skelton,	James Todd,
William Franklin,	James Milnor,
Richard Hartshorne,	George Williams,
Robert Smith, jun.	William Jones,
John Griscom,	John Vaughan,
Amos Cooper,	Joseph Bringhurst, jun.
William Newbold,	Othniel Alsop.
Thomas P. Cope,	

Resolved, That Thomas P. Cope and James Milnor, be continued a committee to afford to the author who has undertaken to compose a history

of slavery in the United States, such information and assistance, towards the completion of that work, as may be in their power; and, should it be completed before the next annual meeting of the Convention, the said committee are authorized, if it meet their approbation, to cause it to be published by subscription, or otherwise; to superintend the publication, and agree upon a suitable compensation to the author.

Resolved, That John Coffin and William Franklin, of New-York---Richard Hartshorne and Robert Smith, jun. of New-Jersey---and John Vaughan and Joseph Bringhurst, jun. of Delaware, be appointed to co-operate and correspond with the preceding committee, and to furnish them with all such documents as they can obtain, and which may be useful to the author of the proposed work.

The resolution, laid on the table at last meeting, respecting an application to Congress to prohibit the importation of slaves into the territory of Louisiana, was deliberated on and adopted; and George Williams and Joseph Bringhurst jun. were appointed to draft an essay of a memorial on the subject, and produce it at next sitting.

The following circular address to the several Abolition Societies was read, considered by paragraphs, and approved.

To the.....Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

WE have received, with cordial satisfaction, the addresses to this Convention from the societies in New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware.

This interchange of opinion and information, between the Convention and its constituents, is as the vital current of the body, flowing from part to part, and communicating genial warmth, and health, and vigour, to every portion of the system.

Our satisfaction would have been much increased, could we have acknowledged the receipt of communications and delegations from several societies which were represented in former Conventions, but from whom we have now no direct intelligence; and had some of the addresses which have been presented this year, contained more detailed information.

Impressed with a sense of the interesting nature of the subject, we cannot but call your renewed attention to the education of the blacks. The schools are represented as being, in some parts, in a flourishing condition; while in others, it is to be feared, little or nothing has been done towards their establishment and support. We recommend to such societies as have it not in their power, from the scantiness of their funds and other circumstances, to employ regular tutors, to form associations of their members, or other well disposed individuals, to instruct the people of colour in the most simple and useful branches of education; especially on the first day of the week—a day too often devoted to dissipation. It is also of importance that their religious and moral education should keep pace with their knowledge of letters, or much permanent good will not be accomplished. They should be taught to fear and venerate the Deity; to respect the laws of the country, and in all things to act as becomes men escaped from bondage, and on on whose good conduct must, in some measure, depend the liberation of their brethren, and the kind

treatment of such as remain in slavery. We believe it would be profitable occasionally to convene them, in order to afford suitable opportunities to impress their minds with these truths.

As much good may be expected to result from the establishment of a fund, to be at the disposal of the Convention, we hope the laudable example set by some of the societies, in their donations for that purpose, will be followed by wealthy individuals, and by other societies who are in a capacity to afford it.

A person of established literary reputation has been engaged to write a history of the rise, progress, and present state of slavery in the United States; and some advancement has been made in the work—As a great variety of information on this subject will be necessary, to enable the author to compose a correct and ample history, you are requested to collect and forward, without delay, all such essays and facts, relative to the design, as may be in your power.

At the same time that we invite a vigilant and constant attention, in the friends of the blacks, to prevent as far as their power extends, the infraction of the laws of the country in favour of emancipation, we confidently trust that due care will be observed to select men to the several offices of the societies, who have their zeal tempered with prudence and knowledge; for we are sensible, that for want of sound discretion on the part of some well-meaning, but over-zealous individuals, the views and conduct of the body at large, have been grossly misunderstood: the cause has suffered undeserved reproach in the minds of some of our fellow citizens, and heavy expences have been incurred

in the unfavourable termination of suits undertaken without sufficient evidence, and with too much precipitation.

Being persuaded that no favourable opportunity should be lost for impressing the public mind with the iniquity of slavery, and the varied vices and evils, which are incident to it, in all their forms and consequences, we entreat such of you as have not chosen Standing Committees, charged with the publication of extracts and fugitive pieces, on this very interesting subject, to adopt the measure: Its utility has been fully proven by experience, which is the best test of wisdom. To those societies who have derived advantage from the practice, we recommend a diligent and habitual attention to the subject.

We observe, with much sensibility and regret, that the inhuman and wicked practice of kidnapping, still prevails in our country, and that several cases of it have occurred since the meeting of the last Convention. Was there no other object to claim the ardent sympathy, and the active opposition of our associated brethren, than this alone, it would of itself be sufficiently interesting and momentous to justify an union of all our powers, and a vigorous combination of all our efforts, to resist this single enormity, this cruel and savage violation of the rights of our fellow-men. We request that you will, in your succeeding communications to the Convention, furnish accurate accounts of the several cases which may come under your notice, and that you will detail with precision, such of them as may be attended with particular circumstances of atrocity. The perpetrators should be known and exposed to public odium: Their names whenever detected, should be circulated through-

out the continent, through the medium of the public prints; and no offender, who can be brought to punishment, should be suffered to escape the just penalty of his transgressions.

The discouragements which prevail among the friends and advocates of the African race, especially to the southward, have excited the anxious concern of the Convention. While we have nine hundred thousand slaves in our country—while we have the strongest evidence that new importations will take place—while the abominable practice of kidnapping exists to an alarming and most sorrowful extent—while we have reason to believe that hundreds of vessels sail annually from our shores to traffic in the blood of our fellow-men—and while we feel, acknowledge, and deplore, that the cause of emancipation has many strenuous, powerful, and unwearied opponents, in every quarter of the union—Can this be the time to remit our efforts? and to abandon that standard under which, with the favour and protection of Providence, so many thousands have been rescued from the yoke of bondage, and restored to the enjoyment of their natural rights? not so brethren—Be not disheartened—Let us rather redouble our diligence to help forward the great and good work in which we have engaged; resting our hopes of ultimate success, on our honest and disinterested endeavours, and on the justice of our cause.

The following persons were appointed to constitute the Acting Committee, viz. John Griscom, James Milnor, George Williams, William Jones, Joseph Bringhurst, jun.

On motion, resolved, That John Vaughan and Robert Smith, jun. be a committee to prepare and report a set of rules for the government of the Acting Committee.

Adjourned till to-morrow morning, at 10 o'clock.

January 13th, 1804.

Convention met pursuant to adjournment.

PRESENT:---

MATTHEW FRANKLIN, PRESIDENT.

Abraham Skelton,	Thomas P. Cope,
William Franklin,	James Todd,
John Coffin,	James Milnor,
Richard Hartshorne,	George Williams,
Robert Smith, jun.	William Jones,
John Griscom,	John Vaughan,
Amos Cooper,	Joseph Bringhurst, jun.
William Newbold,	Othniel Alsop.

The committee appointed to draft a memorial to congress, produced the following; which was read by paragraphs, adopted, and referred to the Acting Committee, who are desired to forward the same to the seat of government.

TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.

THE Convention of Delegates, from the different Abolition Societies of the United States, beg leave respectfully to propose for your

tion, the utility and propriety of passing
, as shall prohibit the importation of slaves
Territory of Louisiana, lately ceded to the
tates.

memorialists feel themselves deeply im-
ith this important subject; and they deem
ity to solicit, most earnestly, your serious
to the proposition. They believe, that
nd sound policy are so intimately united,
Eternal Parent, that man cannot separate
impunity. If wisdom urge the perform-
y particular act---if it command the for-
d establishment of any specific law; the
policy will be evinced by obedience to
ction.

irtue, the offspring of wisdom, teaches
ove his fellow-man, and enjoins him to
ll that may be within the compass of his
for the general happiness of his species.
ational governments comply with this
t and sublime law, they become the pro-
instruments of national blessings; but
y oppose or disregard its dictates, their
nts must necessarily feel, sooner or later,
amities which follow such opposition or

cestors have, unhappily, entailed on some
ates, the evils of slavery. Many of our
izens in those states, we believe, are
ly sensible of the magnitude of their bur-
t they know and feel, that man may com-
with more facility than he can eradicate
quences. Your memorialists entreat you
on---to consider, with impartial attention,
rs and difficulties before you; and beseech

you, with deep concern, to preserve the country, whose regulations depend on your wisdom, from similar calamities.

They also respectfully suggest to you, that while the Constitution of the United States declares all men equally entitled to liberty, they cannot conceive our government as acting consistently with its declarations, if it shall, in any instance, authorize man to enslave unoffending man. In compliance with that distinguishing principle of our national constitution, a former congress judged it expedient to introduce among its regulations for the government of the North-Western Territory, a provision resembling that which your memorialists now suggest to you.

There is another consideration, to which your memorialists feel themselves bound to call your attention. While the governments of Europe are shaken by civil discord, or surrounded by the incalculable cruelties and horrors of national warfare, a benificent and over-ruling Providence has been pleased to preserve for our country, the blessings of peace—to grant us new proofs of his goodness—and to place us in a condition of prosperity, unrivalled in the records of history. Does it not become the duty of a nation so crowned with the blessings of peace, and plenty, and happiness, to manifest its gratitude, to the whole world, by acts of justice and virtue? For the true honour of our country—from benevolence towards the future possessors of our newly acquired soil, your memorialists hope you will hear and grant their request. And with all the respect which is due to the representatives of a free people, they subscribe themselves cordially your friends and fellow-citizens.

The resolution instructing the Acting Committee to institute a correspondence with the friends of abolition in the eastern states, was taken up and agreed to.

The address to the people of the United States was again read; and, after some discussion, it was, on motion, agreed to be recommitted to the same committee, and produced at our next sitting.

William Newbold requested leave of absence for the remainder of the session, which was granted.

Adjourned till this evening at half past six o'clock.

January 13th,---Half past Six o'clock, P. M.

Convention met.

PRESENT:---

MATTHEW FRANKLIN, PRESIDENT.

Abraham Skelton,
William Franklin,
John Coffin,
Richard Hartshorne,
Robert Smith, jun.
John Griscom,
Amos Cooper,
Thomas P. Cope,
James Todd,
James Milnor,
George Williams,
William Jones,
John Vaughan,
Joseph Bringhurst, jun.
Othniel Alsop.

The following rules for the government of the Acting Committee, reported by the committee appointed for the purpose, were now considered and adopted:——

Rules for the Government of the Acting Committee.

I. IT shall be their duty, to meet as soon after the rise of the Convention as conveniently may be, to organize themselves; and they shall hold stated meetings on the first Mondays in the months of March, May, July, and December.

II. At their first meeting, they shall appoint a chairman and secretary----It shall be the duty of the Chairman, to preside at the meetings of the Committee; and any written communications from members residing at a distance, shall be addressed to him.

III. The Secretary shall keep regular minutes of their proceedings, and record them in a book, to be provided for the purpose.

IV. Special meetings may be called by the Chairman, at the request of any two members.

V. At all meetings of the committee, three members shall constitute a quorum.

VI. At the close of the term for which they are appointed, the minutes of their proceedings shall be submitted to the inspection of the Convention.

On motion, resolved, That the treasurer, with the advice and approbation of the Acting Committee, be at liberty to place at interest, from time to time, such monies as he may deem proper.

An amended form of an address to the people of the United States, being produced, was read and agreed to as follows:

TO THE

PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

THE American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the Condition of the African race, assembled for the purpose of deliberation upon such matters as relate to the design of their institution, believe it their duty to address you at this time: not with a view to descant upon the horrors of slavery, or its incompatibility with sound policy, with justice, with morality, and with the spirit and doctrines of christianity: for besides that the circumscribed nature of such an address necessarily precludes lengthy animadversion, these are topics, which have been so repeatedly and ably discussed, as to leave little room for additional argument or new illustration.—The feelings and the judgment have been often addressed with all the strength of reason and the powers of eloquence, and although prejudice may blind the eyes of some, and avarice close the avenues of sensibility in others, we derive consolation from the assurance, that the wise and the good, the liberal and the considerate of all classes of the community, lament the existence of slavery, and consider it as a dark stain in the annals of our country. We do not even hesitate to believe, that many who hold

slaves by demise, acknowledge the injuſtice of the tenure; but perplexed in the contemplation of the embarrassment in which they find themselves, they are ready to exclaim, "What shall be done with them!" We would willingly include these among the number of our friends, and entreat them to unite in the removal of an evil so justly and almost universally deplored.

A principal object of our concern, is to rouse the attention of the public to the continued---may we not say---increasing necessity of exertion. We fear many have taken up an idea, that there is less occasion now than formerly, for active zeal in promoting the cause of the oppressed African: but when it is remembered that there are about nine hundred thousand slaves in our country! that hundreds of vessels do annually sail from our shores, to traffic in the blood of our fellow men! and that the abominable practice of kidnapping is carried on to an alarming extent! surely it will not be thought a time for supineness and neglect. Ought not rather every faculty of the mind to be awakened? and in a matter wherein the reputation and prosperity of these United States are so deeply involved, is it possible that any can remain as indifferent and idle spectators?

The gross and violent outrages committed by a horde of kidnappers, call aloud for redress. We have reason to believe, there is a complete chain of them along our sea coast, from Georgia to Maine. Like the vulture, soaring in apparent indifference, while watching for his prey, these shameless men, disguised in the habiliments of gentlemen, haunt public places, and at night seize and carry off the victims of their avarice. The Convention are informed of some of their insidious manoeuvres

They generally have vessels moored in small rivers and creeks, and after stealing the unprotected, they decoy by stratagem and allure by specious offers of gain, such free persons of colour as they find susceptible of delusion. Others residing near the sea-coast, are continually purchasing slaves in the middle states, to sell at an advanced price to their compeers in infamy. For the victims of this shocking business, they find a ready market among the southern planters. The design of this detail, must be obvious: It is to excite the vigilance of every friend to humanity and to virtue, in the detection and punishment of these monsters in the shape of men.

To complain of injusice, or petition for redress of grievances, cannot be mistaken for rebellion against the laws of our country. We lament therefore the existence of statutes in the state of North Carolina, prohibiting individuals the privilege of doing justice to the unfortunate slave, and to their own feelings, by setting him at liberty; and we learn with the deepest regret, that the state of South Carolina has recently repealed the law prohibiting the importation of slaves from Africa into that state. Such appears to be the melancholy fact; but we cannot restrain the involuntary question—Is this possible? Is the measure of iniquity not yet filled? Is there no point at which you will stop? Or was it necessary to add this one step, to complete the climax of folly, cruelty, and desperation? Oh legislators! we beseech you to reflect, before you increase the evils which already surround you in gloomy and frightful perspective!

Beholding with anxiety the increase rather than diminution of slavery and its dreadful concomitants, we earnestly request the zealous co-operation of

every friend to justice and every lover of his country. It is an honourable, a virtuous and a humane cause in which we have embarked. Much good has already been effected, but much remains to be done; and, under the divine blessing, may we not confidently hope, that in proportion to the sincerity of our motives, and the temperate, firm, and persevering constancy of our exertions, will be our success, and peaceful reward. Those who live contiguous to the sea-ports, in particular, we wish may be stimulated to vigilance, that none of those shameful acts of atrocity adverted to, may elude deserved punishment; and our fellow citizens of the eastern states are respectfully invited to pay attention to the clandestine traffic in slaves, carried on from some of their ports. Such daring infractions of the laws of our country require prompt and decisive measures.

Many aspersions have been cast upon the advocates of the freedom of the Blacks, by malicious or interested men; but, conscious of the rectitude of our intentions, and the disinterestedness of our endeavours, we hope not to be intimidated by censure from performing the part assigned us. We frankly own, that it is our wish to promote a general emancipation; and, in doing this, it is our belief we essentially promote the true interests of the state: Although many inconveniencies may result from a general liberation of the People of Colour; yet those which flow from their continuance in slavery, must be infinitely greater, and are every day increasing. It is, therefore, in our estimation, desirable that this object should be brought about with as much speed as a prudent regard to existing circumstances, and the safety of the country, will admit: But in all our endeavours for its accomplishment, we hope to move with care and circum-

spection. We pointedly disavow the most distant intention to contravene any existing law of the states collectively or separately---We will not knowingly infringe upon the nominal rights of property, although those rights may only be traced to our statute-books; and while we desire to be supported in our endeavours to defend the cause of the oppressed, we hope that discretion and moderation will characterize all our proceedings. We feel with others the common frailties of humanity, and, therefore cannot expect an exemption from error. The best intentions are sometimes inadvertently led astray; a lively zeal in a good cause may occasionally overleap the bounds of discretion: although therefore individuals may, in some instances, have suffered their zeal to exceed knowledge, yet we repeat, that the line of conduct which we approve, and which is consonant with the spirit and design of our institutions, is in strict conformity with a due submission to existing laws, and to the legal claims of our fellow citizens. On this ground we think we have a juſt claim to the countenance and support of all liberal minds---of all who delight in the real prosperity of their country, and in the multiplication of human happiness.

We conclude in the expression of a hope, that the Supreme Disposer of events, will prosper our labours in this work of justice, and hasten the day, when liberty shall be proclaimed to the captive, and this land of boasted freedom and independence, be relieved from the opprobrium which the sufferings of the oppressed African now cast upon it.

Resolved, That the Acting Committee procure the insertion of the preceding address in as many

of the public newspapers as possible; and that they also cause one thousand copies thereof, together with one thousand copies of the address to the free blacks to be printed in sheets, and transmitted to the different societies for distribution.

Resolved, That the said committee cause five hundred copies of the proceedings of this convention, and as many copies of the circular address as they may judge necessary to be printed and transmitted as above.

Resolved, That the Acting Committee present the thanks of the Convention to the President of the select council of the city of Philadelphia, for the use of this chamber during the present session.

Adjourned sine die.

Published by order of the Convention,

OTHNIEL ALSOP, Sec'ry.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE TENTH

American Convention

FOR PROMOTING THE

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

AND

IMPROVING THE CONDITION

OF THE

AFRICAN RACE:

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE FOURTEENTH DAY OF JANUARY, ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND FIVE, AND CONTINUED BY ADJOURNMENTS UNTIL THE SEVENTEENTH DAY OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY KIMBER, CONRAD, & CO.

1805.

Tenth Convention/351

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE TENTH

AMERICAN CONVENTION

FOR PROMOTING THE

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY, *&c.*

SELECT COUNCIL CHAMBER.

Philadelphia, January 14th, 1805.

Three o'clock P. M.

THIS being the day appointed by the Constitution for the meeting of the American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the Condition of the African Race,....a number of Delegates attended, and produced their credentials, by which it appeared that the following persons were appointed to represent their respective Societies, in this Convention, viz.

New-York.....John Murray, Jun.
Adrian Hegeman,
Isaac Hicks,
Walter Morton,
Joshua Underhill,

William T. Slocum,
Isaac A. Vanhook,
Rudolph Bunner,
Samuel Burling,
Samuel Hicks.

New-Jersey....Richard Hartshorne,
Gershom Craft,
Clement Hall,
John Wister,
Josiah Reeve,
Benjamin Cooper,
James J. Wilson.

Pennsylvania....Thomas P. Cope,
Othniel Alsop,
Walter Franklin,
William Jones,
Timothy Paxson,
John R. Coates.

Delaware.....George Munro,
Cyrus Newlin,
William Poole,
Joseph Bringhurst, jun.

The Delegates present were....Walter Morton, William T. Slocum, Rudolph Bunner, Gershom Craft, Clement Hall, Josiah Reeve, James J. Wilson, Thomas P. Cope, Othniel Alsop, William Jones, Timothy Paxson, Cyrus Newlin, William Poole, and Joseph Bringhurst, jun.

The Convention proceeded to the choice of Officers, when the following persons were duly elected, viz.

GERSHOM CRAFT....PRESIDENT.
OTHNIEL ALSOP.....SECRETARY.
THOMAS P. COPE....TREASURER.

John Rafield was appointed door-keeper.

Communications from the societies of New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware were read, as follows :.....

Report of the New-York Society for Promoting the Manumission of Slaves, and protecting such of them as have been, or may be liberated.

To the Convention of Delegates, from the several Abolition Societies in the United States, to be held at Philadelphia, on the 14th day of First Month, 1805.

YOUR last circular communication accompanied with an address to the people of colour, and another to the citizens of the United States, were gratefully received by us. The former has been attended to on our part, and the excellent and appropriate addresses have been distributed, and circulated in a manner we thought most conducive to their object.

Notwithstanding the difficulties we have had to encounter, and the various discouragements we have met with, in the discharge of our duties as members of an association, formed on the principles of humanity and justice, we continue to be more and more convinced, of the goodness of the cause, in which we are engaged, and to be animated with the prospect, that the great object of all our ef-

forts will ultimately succeed, and be attended with the happy consequences we have ever anticipated.

Though we may regret that some of the earlier advocates of emancipation have relaxed in their zeal, or become indifferent to the cause, we rejoice in the accession of a greater number, whose future exertions and perseverance, we trust, will be equal to the magnitude and dignity of the work in which we are engaged.

It is with great satisfaction we are enabled to state, that the standing committee in the vigorous discharge of the duties assigned to them, have met with the desired success in relieving several from the bonds of slavery, and affording relief to many, who had a claim to their sympathy and benevolence. It is however with deep regret and sorrow we observe, that in defiance of the laws enacted by the national and state Legislatures, for the restriction and prevention of the nefarious traffic, in slaves, and the still more heinous crime of kidnapping, there is too much reason to believe that this barbarous and inhuman practice still exists. What more can be done to detect and counteract the wicked arts of those concerned in this traffic, so repugnant to the dictates of humanity and the laws of the land, we must submit to the discernment and wisdom of the convention to discover.

Though we have, at various times, represented the increasing and prosperous state of the School under our care, and particularly in our communication, on first month 1803, yet as we regard the subject as of primary importance, we should not do justice to our feelings, were we to forbear making some mention of the present condition of that institution. This cannot be better done than by adopt-

ing the languge of the report of the trustees to this society. That the school continues to be very "respectably supported, consisting of more than one hundred scholars, many of whom have made a handsome proficiency in learning; a number of them who have had their education solely in this school, have made considerable progress in arithmetic, and all are in a state of improvement, we believe equal to that in any school of white children, consisting of the same number, and having the same opportunity of attending, and it may afford the society satisfaction to be informed, that the children generally exhibit a very decent appearance in their persons, and apparel, and are a pleasing charge to the trustees."

A careful attention to the moral and literary improvement of the rising generation, is justly considered by all as essential to the civil and religious welfare of society. If we regard it as a duty incumbent upon us, by the establishment of Schools and seminaries of learning to promote the education of youth, that they may be prepared to act their parts on the stage of human life with dignity and propriety, ought we entirely to neglect that portion of our fellow beings who are intitled to our pity, and whose enjoyment of liberty, may be of but little use either to themselves or to the community, unless they are qualified by suitable instruction to conduct with propriety in the various stations allotted to them in civil society. In proportion, therefore, as the number of free blacks, is increased, have we regarded it as our duty to provide schools for the education of the Children. The one under our immediate inspection is divided into two departments, one of which is intrusted to the care of a free man of colour, whose competence and assiduity have hitherto given satisfaction to the trustees

the other is under the direction of a female, who has for many years been employed by the society, and who has by her exertions merited their approbation.

We feel an ardent solicitude that the continued and laudable efforts of the Convention, in so just a cause, may not only tend to enlighten the minds of the prejudiced and perverse, but be crowned with success in the final extinction of slavery and all commerce in our fellow men.

The following persons are appointed delegates to represent this society in Convention, viz....John Murray jun. Adrian Hegeman, Isaac Hicks, Walter Morton, Joshua Underhill, William T. Slocum, Isaac A. Vanhook, Rudolph Bunner, Samuel Burling, Samuel Hicks.

Signed on behalf of the New-York Society for promoting the Manumission of Slaves, &c.

New-York 12th mo. 25th, 1804.

VALENTINE SEAMAN, 2d *V. President.*

CHARLES COLLINS, *Assist. Sec'ry.*

The Officers of the Society for the present year are:....

Samuel L. Mitchell, President; James Robertson, first Vice-President; Valentine Seaman, second Vice-President; George Newbold, Secretary; Charles Collins, Assistant Secretary; John Murray, jun. Treasurer; Matthew Franklin, Register; Nehemiah Allen, Chairman, and John L. Bowne, Secretary of the Standing Committee; Andrew Cock, Chairman, and Matthew Franklin, Secretary of the Board of Trustees for the School at New-York; Alexander Hamilton, Peter J. Munro,

D. D. Tompkins, William Johnson, Counsellors; John Murray, jun. Elisha W. King, Thomas Franklin, Henry Post, Andrew Cock, Preserved Fish, the Committee of Correspondence.

From the New-Jersey Society for promoting the gradual Abolition of Slavery.

To the next Convention of Delegates to be held in Philadelphia.

ALTHOUGH we have not much important information to communicate, yet concurring with the convention in the utility of annual reports from the respective associations, we readily comply with the recommendation.

The last circular address of the Convention has been received and read amongst us, the interesting purport thereof having obtained our deliberate attention, particularly that part relative to the institution of schools among the people of colour, and their moral and religious improvement. It is not to be expected that any sudden and striking effect can be produced; but it would ill agree with the characteristics of a rational benevolence, to be deterred from attempting the atchievement of a momentous and extensive benefit, because of obstructions, which, though they may render the labour tedious, must eventually be subdued by time and perseverance. Notwithstanding this work has not visibly progressed since our last report, yet as the attention of the society has at this time been particularly drawn to the subject, we are not without a hope that some more effectual measures will ere long be adopted and pursued in various parts of the state. The interest and the happiness of the nation is deep-

ly involved in the issue, and all its sincere friends should feel themselves bound to co-operate in the laudable work.

It is with peculiar pleasure that we have it in our power to commemorate an event, which, as a demonstration of the increasing triumph of justice and charity over ignorance and prejudice, must give universal satisfaction to all liberal minds. At the winter session of our Legislature, a committee of this society attended to promote the success of the bill referred to in our last report: They met with a hearty co-operation on the part of many of the members, and finally it passed into an act almost by an unanimous vote. We may further add, from authority which may be relied upon, that, contrary to the expectation of many, the measure has given pretty general satisfaction, and but few murmurs have been excited, even in those parts of the state where there are most slaves. This law enacts that all children born of slaves after the 4th day of July 1804, shall be free, subject to a servitude, if males, until 25, if females until 21. A copy of the act shall be subjoined to this report.

We have not been unmindful of the recommendation respecting the publication of essays on the subject of abolition; our standing committee, separated for that purpose, having procured the insertion in the public prints of several pieces calculated to be useful.

A variety of cases of persons claiming their freedom, on the ground of illegal detention, are at this time under the care of our acting committees, and it appears by reports forwarded, that six persons have been set at liberty since last year by the aid of the society. One of the decisions in behalf of two of the number it is hoped will tend to establish the

claim of seven or eight children of the same family, but it is expected not without fresh suits, the parties concerned residing in another part of the state. It was decided on the ground of the grand-mother being of Indian extraction. The other decision, which liberated four of the number stated, being in the supreme court, we shall annex a copy of the record of said court respecting the same.

The printed copies of the proceedings of the last convention, apportioned to this society, have been received, and the requisite means taken for their proper distribution; as also a number of copies of addresses, one to the people of colour, and the other to the citizens of the United States: the latter has been republished in two of the news-papers of this state.

Annexed is a list of the officers of the society for the ensuing year.

We have appointed Richard Hartshorne, Gershom Craft, Clement Hall, John Wister, Josiah Reeves, Benjamin Cooper, and James J. Wilson, to represent us in the Convention, to whom we refer for more particular information.

Signed on behalf of a general meeting of said society held at Trenton 9th mo. (Sept. 26,) 1804.

WILLIAM GRIFFITH, *President.*

ATTEST,
ROBERT SMITH, Jun. *Sec'ry.*

Officers of the Society for the ensuing year.

PRESIDENT....WILLIAM GRIFFITH.

VICE-PRES.... { GERSHOM CRAFT, WILLIAM NEWBOLD.

TREASURER...WILLIAM COXE.

SECRETARY...ROBERT SMITH, Jun.

Chairmen of District Meetings.

Burlington....William Newbold,
Gloucester.....James Cooper,
Salem.....Clement Hall,
Rahway.....John Shotwell,
Trenton.....Thomas M. Potter.

To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

We have appointed the following members to represent this society in Convention at your ensuing sitting: Thomas P. Cope, Othniel Alsop, Walter Franklin, William Jones, Timothy Paxson and John R. Coats.

It is with great satisfaction we recognize in the last proceedings and address of your body, a continuance of the same zeal which has heretofore animated the friends of the unhappy blacks: While this zeal remains unabated, and is accompanied by corresponding exertions we may at least anticipate a mitigation of the sufferings of this oppressed class of our fellow men, and be encouraged to extend our prospects under the favor of Providence to their complete deliverance. But in the prosecution of all lawful and honest means to effect so desirable an end, we are aware of the propriety of your counsel, that "our zeal be tempered with prudence and knowledge," and so far as our sphere of active interference extends we shall endeavour to make it acceptable as well as useful, by that discretion and moderation which ought always to be manifested by the supporters of a righteous cause. Much of the exertion of our society will, in consequence of the rapid de-

cline of slavery amongst us, be employed in future, less in obtaining the liberation of blacks than in the improvement of their morals, and the promotion of the education of their offspring. It gives us great pleasure that the blacks themselves seem lately to have felt more than ordinary concern on this subject. In addition to the means of education, heretofore provided, they have established two schools in this city amongst themselves: One under the direction of the religious society of African Episcopalians, the other under that of an association of blacks, for the special purpose, without distinction of religious sects. As these establishments have been recently undertaken, we cannot say a great deal respecting them, but, from our knowledge of several of their promoters, we hope they will be productive of much usefulness to the rising generation of this people, and under that impression we are desirous of encouraging their attempts.

Persuaded, as we are, of the capacity of the blacks for the reception of knowledge, and of the importance of knowledge in promoting virtue and morality, it is the unceasing wish of our hearts to see an increase of the means of its attainment. The community at large have a claim upon us for our exertions in this particular, and we hope it will never be an imputation justly applicable to any of us, that, while we have been anxiously solicitous for the release of individuals from bondage, we have been careless of their subsequent advancement in the qualifications requisite to the proper enjoyment of the blessing of freedom.

Your recommendation of the practice of publishing extracts and fugitive pieces, on the subject of slavery, meets our approbation, although there seems

the less necessity for it where the public mind is so strongly averse to slavery as it is with us.

Our committee of correspondence have been charged with the execution of this duty, so far as its performance shall be deemed profitable, and we hope it may be attended to by our sister societies, as well as by capable individuals, where the popular prepossessions still remain unfavorable to emancipation.

By several communications received from England, we are greatly rejoiced to find that the cause of Abolition there is in an advancing state. Its friends, notwithstanding the postponement of the question by the house of lords, entertain very sanguine hopes of success at the next session of parliament. Associations, for promoting this great object have revived, several authors of eminence have published much interesting matter on the subject, and the general aspect of things appears more propitious than at any former period.

We lament with you that, in the southern parts of our country, discouragements should prevail amongst the friends and advocates of the African race. We know they are surrounded with difficulties. Considering how formidable is the opposition against which they have to contend, we sympathize with them in the painful sensations which continual disappointment and defeat must occasion; but we see no reason for them to despair. In many of those places, where personal slavery is now unknown, there was once as little prospect of the destruction of the Hydra as with themselves, yet events have shewn the advantage of perseverence, and how foolish it would have been despondingly to abandon the work. Truth is often making its impression on the minds

of men when their outward actions appear most manifestly to oppose its dictates, and reason, as well as religion, teaches us to expect a blessing upon the honest labours of those who employ themselves in its defence.

May we therefore be renewedly animated in the prosecution of unwearied endeavours for the benefit of the people whose interests we have espoused. Reflection and experience more and more convince us that we are conscientiously bound not to remit our efforts, and it is a sweet consolation that they also authorize us to anticipate, with confidence, that our labours will in the result be alike conducive to the common interests of the community and to the comfort and happiness of our enslaved fellow men.

Signed on behalf of the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

Philadelphia, 1st, mo. 7th, 1805.

ROBERT PATTERSON,
VICE PRESIDENT.

ATTEST,

JOHN BACON, SECRETARY.

The Officers of the Society for the present year are :....

PRESIDENT....DOCTOR BENJAMIN RUSH.

VICE-PRES.... { ROBERT PATTERSON,
THOMAS PARKER.

TREASURER...JOHN EVANS.

SECRETARIES.... { JOHN BACON,
BENJAMIN WILLIAMS.

COUNSELLORS.

William Lewis,	Joseph Hemphill,
William Rawle,	John R. Coates,
John Hallowell,	Daniel Smith,
Walter Franklin,	George Fisher,
James Milnor,	George Vaux,
Joseph Hopkinson	Jacob S. Waln, Jun.

ELECTING COMMITTEE.

Hanson Waters,	Samuel Smith,
Joseph Moore,	Thomas Harrison,
Isaac T. Hopper,	William Master,
Abraham Hillyard,	Thomas Rogers,
Edmund Kinsey,	Isaac Pearson,
Charles Townsend,	Joseph Price.

To the American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

FELLOW LABOURERS,

We salute you with fraternal regard, and acknowledge, with pleasure, the reception of a number of copies of your "Advice to free blacks and other free people of colour," your "Address to the citizens of the United States," and your minutes and very interesting circular address of last year.

In your circular address there are several subjects which require our particular notice; we shall in our observations pursue the order which they hold in the address. First, in conformity to your advice respecting the establishment of schools, for persons of colour, we inform you that our funds being inadequate to the payment of a tutor, we appointed a committee, of ten members from our society, for

the purpose of instructing those persons on the First-day afternoon of the week, in reading, writing and arithmetic. The committee engaged in their employment early in the summer, and continued their labours until late in the autumn. About thirty persons attended the school each day; many of them manifested sincere desires to improve their minds, and several evinced considerable advancement, during the maintenance of the school. From several circumstances it was concluded by the committee, most advisable to discontinue the school during the winter. We hope, however, that the business will be recommenced early next summer.

A committee, appointed from our society, convened the blacks and other persons of colour, and read and distributed your address to them. The persons assembled conducted themselves in a very respectful manner, and appeared to listen with great attention to your advice. Several observations were made on the different subjects of the address, and we believe the meeting was useful. The people of that class, in this town and its neighbourhood, have been improving during the past year.

We plainly perceive that much good may arise from the establishment of a permanent fund, to be at the disposal of the convention, and we regret that our poverty will not allow us, at present, to cast a mite into the treasury. We presume, however, to recommend your continued attention to this important object, and we hope we shall not always be compelled to bestow apologies instead of money.

We learn with much satisfaction that the history of the rise, progress, and present state of Slavery, in the United States, is advancing. We have

not yet collected either facts, or essays, which could forward your design; we shall keep the subject in view and forward such as may come to our hands, or we shall be able to obtain.

Your observations respecting the intemperate zeal of some individuals, in the cause of emancipation, are judicious and receive our approbation. We believe the great and noble cause which we have espoused, will be most effectually advanced, by a persevering resolution, mingled with the mild spirit of christianity. Violence will always create new enemies; but calm and manly courage, supported by sound reasoning, must finally break down the mounds which the prejudices of education, and avarice have erected between Africans and humanity.

We believe, with you, that frequent publications of extracts and fugitive pieces, calculated to impress the public mind with a true sense of the injustice and iniquity of slavery, will be essentially beneficial to the designs of our institutions, and we appointed a committee of four members for the purpose of publishing, weekly, in our news papers, either extracts or original essays, as they should judge expedient, but we regret that the business has not been carried on with that spirit which becomes our cause.

We present you our cordial congratulations on the success which attended your petition, to our national Legislature, against the admission of slaves into the Louisiana territory. This happy event, we hope, will encourage you to engage in the business which may come before you, with a spirit of cheerful industry.

One of the suits, mentioned in our last report, has been dismissed by our acting committee, from a

belief that the evidence obtained was not sufficient to insure a successful issue in case of trial. The other is continued, but delayed in consequence of the difficulty in procuring the necessary testimony. The committee appointed to attend our Legislature last session, reported, that their exertions for the passage of the bill for the gradual abolition of slavery, were unsuccessful. The consideration of the bill was postponed sine die.

Several of our Legislators are slave holders, and others so intimately connected with them, that we are discouraged from renewing our efforts the approaching session of the assembly.

We think it most prudent to delay our exertions until another year. The subject, however, will be brought before the assembly by some of its members, but we cannot, under present circumstances, hope a favourable result.

One slave has been liberated, through the intervention of this society during last year. Several new members have joined us, and we hope they will prove to be an accession of strength. Your address to the citizens of the United States, was published in our news papers, and distributed in the different counties of this state, and we transmitted several copies of it to Marvland and Virginia.

Since our last report, one of our members, by appointment of the society, delivered an oration, in public, on the impolicy and inhumanity of slavery. We think a regular and periodical public delivery of such discourses, may advance the cause of African liberty; but in our society, it will be difficult to persuade suitable persons to engage in the task, and we cannot believe that we can ensure an annual de-

livery of such orations. We have appointed George Munro, Cyrus Newlin, William Poole, and Joseph Bringhurst, jun. to represent our society in Convention.

Signed by order and on behalf of the Delaware Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, by

ALLEN M'LANE, *V. President.*

ZACHARIAH JESS, *Secretary.*

The present officers of this Society are....

PRESIDENT....WILLIAM PRICE,

VICE PRES....ALLEN M'LANE,

TREASURER....WILLIAM SEAL,

SECRETARY....ZACHARIAH JESS.

ACTING COMMITTEE.

John Reynolds,
Isaac H. Starr,
Cyrus Newlin,
Jacob Abrichs.

On motion, resolved, that the foregoing communications be referred to William T. Slocum, James J. Wilson, Thomas P. Cope, and William Poole, to consider and report thereon. The Committee are also instructed to include in their report, such other objects as they may deem proper for the consideration of the Convention.

A report from the Treasurer for the year past was read and approved.

The minutes of the Acting Committee, exhibiting a satisfactory statement of their attention to the duties of their appointment, were read.

The following letter, received by a member of that Committee, which he had not an opportunity of laying before them, was also read, and referred to the Acting Committee hereafter to be appointed.

Alexandria, December 10th, 1804.

YOUR letter of the first Instant, is received, with a copy of the Minutes of the Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery. It gives me sincere pleasure, to find the companions of my early days, taking their station in the ranks with those worthies who contend for an equal distribution of those privileges, the God of nature has destined for the enjoyment of all.

The subject matter of your communication is of so much importance, I am sorry I am so indifferently qualified to answer it in a satisfactory manner; but so far as my efforts can be subservient to the interest of the cause in which you are engaged, they shall be exerted. You are desirious to know what cause has occasioned the decline of the Abolition Society in Alexandria, and what may contribute to its revival.

The investigation of this subject may expose us in rather an unfavorable point of view; notwithstanding this may be the case, I hold it honest to acknowledge an error and endeavour to reform. The decline, or rather the dissolution, of our society, may be attributed to three leading causes. First, the admission of slave-holders into fellowship at its formation. Secondly, a law of the state of Virginia, im-

posing a penalty of one hundred dollars on any person who assisted a slave in establishing his claim to freedom, provided he should fail in the establishment of such claim. And, thirdly, to the rising of the people of colour, at Richmond, under general Gabriel.

As to the first, although the sentiment may appear, on first view, to want liberality, yet it was my opinion at the formation of the society, that a foundation composed of such discordant materials, could never support a superstructure of any weight or durability: the event proved my position to be just.

We had not long been organized, before a multitude of objects requiring our attention, presented. By a law of the state, slaves brought from another state and remaining here for one year without being registered, were declared free. Of this description there were some in the possession of our own members; those members, but feeble advocates at first, at length became our most industrious opponents; thus the seeds of discord were sown, at an early period, by an enemy in the garb of a friend.

The second cause I have noted, was less formidable than the first, though its influence was very perceptible among the cautious and timid members, and of this class we had many; but the greatest obstacle this law placed in our way, was, that the plantiff should sue as a pauper, the court to judge first whether there was good cause for bringing suit, and if determined in the affirmative, the court appointed counsel who was bound by the law to plead without fee. Thus were we often prevented from procuring suitable counsel, and causes suffered much for want of able support. Those suits are mostly prosecuted at inferior courts, where common country justices preside,

and those justices often considerable slave-holders. Under these circumstances the claim must appear as clear as the sun at noon day, before it would be admitted for trial. This abominable law had such a forbidding front, that many of our members deserted the cause, despairing of success at any time.

The third cause I have noted, was fatal to the brightest ornament that ever attracted our attention, I mean the First-day school; this school was under the immediate care of a committee of the most active and intelligent members we had, who were divided into classes, each class serving in its turn as teachers. The good effects of this school exceeded our most sanguine expectations; many of the young boys and girls learned to read in the Testament with tolerable facility, and others of more mature age, learned to write a good legible hand, and made some progress in arithmetic. The dreadful plan of the blacks, under their leader Gabriel, produced much consternation throughout the state. Instructions from the governor were forwarded to the several counties, directing the militia to form patroles, and to disperse any unusual assemblage of black people. At that time our school committee was cautioned that it would be prudent to discontinue the school for a time; that however praise-worthy the object might be, such collections of black people could not be admitted.

A temporary suspension was concluded on, since which we have not been able to acquire sufficient energy, to move one step in the business. We are in fact dead; and I may say, I have no hope of reanimation.

I have thus endeavoured, to assign the true causes of the decline of the society for the relief and protec-

tion of persons illegally held in bondage in Alexandria. It is exhibiting a picture of degeneracy no way pleasing to view; nothing will contribute to our revival, but a more thorough conviction of a divine precept, and tenaciously adhered to; that is, to do unto others as we would they should do unto us. Far indeed is this from being the governing rule in respect to a slave; there is rather a disposition to increase the measure of affliction already apportioned to the poor deserted African.

Nothing has been done by any public body, that I recollect, tending in any manner to mitigate their sufferings, except the presentment of a grand jury at January term, 1802. The grand jury presented as a grievance, the practice of slave dealers from the Carolinas, who purchased negroes here, and in the state of Maryland, and made this town a place of deposit. Our feelings were often shocked with a view of fifty or sixty of those poor objects handcuffed and chained together, taking leave of their friends and relations, never to meet again. Whether the southern market is now better supplied direct from Africa, I cannot say, but we certainly have not so many of those detestable visitors, of late, as we had in time past. If your patience is not too much exhausted, I will transcribe the presentment for your perusal; it will serve to show that this traffic may be so conducted, as to shock even the feelings of a slaveholder.

January Term, 1802.

We the grand jury for the body of the county of Alexandria in the district of Columbia, present as a grievance, the practice of persons coming from distant parts of the United States, into this district, for the purpose of purchasing slaves, where they exhi-

bit to our view, a scene of wretchedness and human degradation, disgraceful to our characters as citizens of a free government. True it is, that those dealers in the persons of our fellow-men, collect within this district, from various parts, numbers of those victims of slavery, and lodge them in some place of confinement until they have completed their numbers. They are then turned out in our streets and exposed to view, loaded with chains, as though they had committed some heinous offence against our laws.

We consider it a grievance that citizens from distant parts of the United States, should be permitted to come within this district and pursue a traffic fraught with so much misery to a class of beings intitled to our protection by the laws of justice and humanity; and that the interposition of civil authority cannot be had, to prevent parents being wrested from their offspring, and children from their parents, without respect to the ties of nature.

We consider those grievances, demanding legislative redress, especially the practice of persons making sale of black people, who are, by will of their masters, designed to be free at the expiration of a term of years, who are sold, and frequently taken to distant parts, where they have not the power to avail themselves of that portion of liberty which was designed for their enjoyment.

This presentment excited but little attention, though all joined in condemning the practice it was intended to expose.

The number of slaves in this district, I believe, is rather on the decrease, partly owing to sales made to purchasers from abroad, and partly to a practice among lenient slave-holders, of setting a moderate

value on the time of the slaves, and suffering them to hire out on the best terms they can; by this means many have been enabled to purchase themselves with the extra wages they get. Since the cultivation of wheat has excited the attention of farmers in the northern neck of Virginia, the hoe has been exchanged for the plough, consequently the same number of hands are not now requisite, to work the same quantity of ground, as when tobacco was the chief crop. Indeed wherever this is the case, the despotic disposition of the master is abating, and the spirit of the slave is rising from the dust. It has moreover a tendency to prepare the minds of the people of this country for the reception of laws, more favourable to the gradual abolition of slavery. At present, there are but few men, of any influence, unpolluted by this debasing species of property.

Richard Hartshorne and Walter Franklin being prevented from attending, by their request, a satisfactory apology for their absence was made.

Adjourned till to-morrow afternoon at 3 o'clock.

January 15th, 3 o'clock P. M.

Convention met, pursuant to adjournment;

PRESENT:....

GERSHOM CRAFT....PRESIDENT.

Walter Morton,
William T. Slocum,
Rudolph Bunner,
Clement Hall,
Josiah Reeve,
James J. Wilson,
Thomas P. Cope,
William Jones,
Timothy Paxson,
Cyrus Newlin,
William Poole,
Joseph Bringhurst, jun.
Othniel Alsop.

Benjamin Cooper, a Delegate from New-Jersey, attended.

The Convention were informed that George Munro and John R. Coates, were unavoidably prevented from meeting them.

The Committee of Arrangement made a report, which was considered, and with some alterations, agreed to as follows :....

The Committee of Arrangement, report....

THAT, on examining the addresses from the different Societies, in order to discover how far the requisitions of the last Convention had claimed attention, they find,

That in some of them, the schools for the education of the blacks are represented as being in a flourishing condition, while in others it appears that little progress in this important object has been made. The committee therefore think it would be proper that in the circular address the subject should be again adverted to, and earnestly recommended. It has also occured to the committee, that advantages might arise from the employment of people of colour, as teachers, when properly qualified persons of that description can be procured. Where regular schools are not supported, the appointment of committees from the societies to superintend the instruction of the blacks, have been productive of benefit. In Wilmington such a committee opened a school on the afternoons of the first day of the week. The example is worthy of imitation elsewhere, and especially in places similarly circumstanced.

That the usefulness of occasionally convening the blacks and people of colour in order to afford suitable opportunities of instructing them in their religious and moral duties, has been fully verified in the experience of several of the societies, and the committee believe it would be right to renew the advice of former conventions to the societies on this head.

That, in the publication of extracts and essays on the subject of slavery, the committee are sorry to believe great remissness has in some instances taken place, yet the policy of the measure is so obvious that they wish it to be again recommended to the notice of the societies, as a powerful mean of obviating popular prejudices, and of preparing the public mind for the reception of important truths and the practice of important duties.

That none of the reports to the convention contain detailed information on the subject of kidnapping, though it is apparent that when it is practicable to procure such details the information might be rendered singularly serviceable.

That the committee believe it might be salutary to appoint some members of the convention to draft an address to the free blacks and people of colour, and to recommend the societies to publish and distribute it, together with the addresses of former conventions, or such parts of them as may be best adapted to circumstances. They also suggest whether it would not be eligible to endeavour to induce that people to contribute some pecuniary assistance, when in circumstances to afford it, to the support of schools for the education of their offspring and such of their brethren as are less comfortably circumstanced than themselves.

They are also of the opinion that the acting committee should be instructed to renew their efforts to correspond with influential individuals, favourable to the cause of emancipation, in both the eastern and southern states, agreeably to the resolutions of last year.

The committee having reason to believe that notwithstanding the prohibitary acts of congress and of the states generally, the African slave-trade is carried on to a very considerable extent in vessels belonging to citizens of the United States, deem it proper that the Convention should encourage the societies to continued and vigilant exertions to detect and bring the offenders to justice.

The committee conclude with a recommendation that a circular address be sent to the societies.

On motion, resolved, that a committee be appointed to draft an address to the several Abolition Societies, and that Joseph Bringhurst, jun. Rudolph Bunner, Josiah Reeve, and Thomas P. Cope, be the committee.

Resolved, that so much of the report of the Committee of Arrangement as relates to the education and moral duties of the blacks....Publishing essays and extracts on the subject of slavery....Kidnapping.....Circulating adddresses to the free blacks and people of colour....and to the African slave-trade, be referred to the committee on the circular address.

Resolved, that Timothy Paxson, William Poole, James J. Wilson, and William T. Slocum, be a committee to draft an address to the free blacks and people of colour.

Resolved, that the recommendation of suggesting to the free blacks, the propriety of contributing to the education of their offspring, be referred to the above committee.

Resolved, that William T. Slocum, Gershom Craft, Thomas P. Cope, Timothy Paxson, William Jones, Othniel Alsop, and Joseph Bringhurst, jun. be the Acting Committee for the ensuing year, and that they be instructed to continue a correspondence on the subject of slavery, agreeably to the recommendation of the Committee of Arrangement.

Information was communicated, that the person engaged in composing a History of Slavery in the United States, had made further progress in that work.

Adjourned till to-morrow afternoon at 3 o'clock.

January 16th, 3 o'clock P. M.

Convention met, pursuant to adjournment:

PRESENT:....

GERSHOM CRAFT....PRESIDENT.

Walter Morton,	Timothy Paxson,
William T. Slocum,	Cyrus Newlin,
Rudolph Bunner,	William Poole,
Josiah Reeve,	Joseph Bringhurst, jun.
Benjamin Cooper,	Othniel Alsop.
William Jones,	

The Convention were informed, by a note from Thomas P. Cope, that he would probably be pre-

vented further attendance, by the indisposition of his family.

The following report was read, which on motion, was referred to the Acting Committee.

At the last Convention, a committee of eight members was appointed for the purpose of forming a plan for the general and gradual Abolition of Slavery in the United States. There are only two members of that committee belonging to the present Convention. Those members have not been able to obtain full interchange of sentiments with their colleagues, on the important subject of their appointment, and they have found it so complex, and affecting so great a variety of interests and passions, and demanding such minute and correct knowledge of the customs, laws, and condition of the people of the southern states, that they do not feel themselves prepared to report any plan for a general abolition, to this Convention.

Resolved, that the Acting Committee be requested to open a correspondence with the London Committee of the Society in England, for promoting the Abolition of the Slave-Trade, on the subject of slavery in general....on which correspondence they are to report annually. They are also authorised and directed to present to that body a bound copy of the minutes of the Convention, since its commencement.

The committee on the circular address, produced an essay, which being read and deliberately considered, was, with some alterations, adopted as follows :.....

To the.....Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

THIS Convention has the pleasure of acknowledging the reception of addresses from the Societies of New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware; and of a communication from the Society of Rhode Island. A free interchange of sentiments between the different societies, through the medium of the Convention, we consider as a matter of primary importance. By such communications, the Convention becomes the central fountain, into which the opinions, and experience of the different societies are received, and from whence the united knowledge may be transmitted to the individual branches. We therefore recommend, to each society, a continuation of the practice, and we earnestly entreat them to comply with our request of last year, by furnishing us with "more detailed information," not only respecting the moral, literary, and legal condition of slaves, and other persons of colour, within their districts, but also with minute accounts of every attempt at kidnapping, mentioning the names of the parties concerned in the business. Such information will open to us an extensive view of slavery and its attendant evils, as they exist within the whole circle of our societies, and enable us to labour with greater certainty and more effect, for the performance of the solemn duties which are imposed on us.

We perceive, with sincere and deep regret, that some societies have not yet made much progress in the establishment of schools for the literary and moral improvement of the people of colour. We cannot withhold the expression of our anxiety on this subject....We consider it a matter of high moment, involving the most interesting and affecting conse-

quences. Shall we, by lukewarmness or neglect, give the enemies of our institutions the triumph of reproaching us with indifference....with a want of that virtue....that inflexible spirit of perseverance, without which the tree we have nourished, and hoped to bring to maturity, may erect its barren and useless branches before us, a gloomy monument of our indolence! With what reproaches, and difficulties, and dangers, have our societies heretofore contended! with a courage and temperance, which could have been maintained only in a great and good cause; we have withstood all the rude onsets of the enemies of rational liberty, and, under the protection of a wise Providence, we have, step by step, moved forward, subduing by the eloquent voice of reason and humanity, the oppressors of the weeping Africans, until we have seen the fetters fall from thousands, and beheld those, who had been reduced to the condition of beasts of burthen, rising from the earth with the privileges and rights of men! Shall we now desert them? after teaching them that they belong to the rank of man, shall we refuse to employ our time and talents in preparing their minds for the enjoyment of those pleasures, and the practice of those virtues which belong to their species? We have hitherto been their friends; if we now desert them, to whom shall they apply for help? Their fate, as it regards human aid, rests chiefly with us. Let us try the strength of our virtue....Let us decide, by a vote in our societies, whether we will continue our parental care over them, or leave them friendless and abandoned to their own weakness and ignorance. This vote will proclaim to the world the sincerity of our views, and the integrity of our hearts. If we are weary of well-doing, we shall forsake them; but if our breasts still glow with benevolence, we shall decide, with one

voice, in their favour. Before we determine the important question, it will be well for us to recollect that no good deed passes unrewarded. Every individual sacrifice, to humanity and virtue, will be placed to our credit in the records of our lives.

The Convention have been informed, by one society, that "not being able to raise funds for the payment of a tutor, they have appointed a committee, of ten members, who maintained a school during the last summer and autumn, on the First-day afternoon of each week, for the moral and literary education of people of colour," and that they propose re-commencing the business early next summer. This conduct merits and receives our approbation, and we regard it as highly worthy the attention of societies in similar circumstances....We exhort them to "go and do likewise."

In the cities of New-York and Philadelphia, the schools appear to be in a flourishing condition: in some of them persons of colour are employed as teachers, and where such persons, properly qualified, can be procured, the Convention believes the employment of them will be attended with peculiar advantages....It will contribute to kindle a spirit of emulation in their brethren. In some places there are persons of colour whose pecuniary circumstances would allow them to give something towards the support of schools, for their own class, and we think it proper and just, that their aid should be solicited.

Several societies have informed us that benefit has arisen from their meetings with the coloured people. We therefore recommend that each society select a committee, of suitable members, whose duty it shall be to assemble the free persons of co-

lour, as often as they shall judge it useful, and communicate to them such advice and instruction, as they shall think necessary; and that the committee report, in writing, the result of their opinions respecting the conference, to the next succeeding meeting of their society.

The Convention of last year, recommended to each society, the appointment of a committee for the purpose of publishing extracts, and essays, shewing the impolicy, and injustice of slavery; but we observe, with regret, this subject has not received that serious and diligent attention to which it was entitled. No abolition society can be ignorant that there are yet many thousands of persons, within the United States, who are opposed, on what they esteem grounds of justice and policy, to African liberty. Many remain under the erroneous notion, that the blacks are a class of beings not merely inferior to, but absolutely a species different from the whites, and that they are intended, by nature, only for the degradations and sufferings of slavery. There was a time when the people of all our states, and members of every religious sect, were overshadowed by the darkness of this error, and, in consequence of their erroneous opinions, practised legal violations of the rights of humanity. The pen, and the tongue of reason and truth have convinced thousands of the falsity of those opinions, and such instruments should not be permitted to rest in idleness, until truth and humanity obtain a complete and universal triumph.

We lament the continued necessity, of inviting your attention to the clandestine commerce, which, in defiance of our state and national laws, is still carried on to the coast of Africa. Information has been received that artful men, with the secrecy of

midnight robbers, have contrived means of loading their vessels for Africa, and obtaining cargoes of slaves, and vending them in the West Indies, without subjecting themselves to such detection as would lead to legal punishment. Let us keep a watchful eye on all persons of this class, and endeavour to deter them from the perpetration of such cruel offences, by the only argument of which they are susceptible, the fear of the just punishment of the laws of their country.

This address will be accompanied by a number of copies of our advice to the free people of colour. We leave it to your discretion, to distribute them, together with such parts of our former advices, as you shall judge expedient.

Finally brethren, we beseech you by the rights of humanity....by the pleadings of mercy....by the great and interesting cause which we have espoused, that you suffer nothing to discourage you in your useful labours....but that you persevere in your good works of justice and benevolence, with a temperate and firm spirit until your task, by the aid of Providence, shall be accomplished.

The following address to the free blacks and other free people of colour, being produced by the committee on the subject, was read, considered, and agreed to.

To the free Blacks and other free people of colour in the United States.

THE American Convention for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and improving the Condition of the African Race, having again assembled for the purpose of advancing your best interest, and

the welfare of your offspring; deem it expedient, once more to address you as children of one Almighty Parent, and members of the same extended family. The objects we have so long, and so assiduously pursued, are highly interesting to society at large, and infinitely important to you in particular....For their attainment, we therefore claim your zealous and uniform co-operation. This demand we make with much confidence, as we are persuaded many of you have already verified, in your own experience, the propriety of former recommendations. You have found that industry and œconomy have procured for you, independence; that temperance has greatly promoted, if not absolutely secured to you, health; and that the cultivation of the faculties of the mind, has enlarged the capacity for discharging your various duties, and for enjoying the numerous benefits you have received. On the contrary, you have seen that idleness, gambling, and dissipation, have uniformly produced poverty and disgrace; that intemperance has generally been the parent of loathsome disease, and the cause of premature death; and that the consequences of ignorance are too frequently, contention and loss. Trusting then, that we can with confidence appeal to your own experience, for a test of the truth of precepts so often inculcated, we beseech you with anxious and tender solicitude to bear them constantly in remembrance, and, with a steady zeal, put them in practice. We are well aware that human nature is frail, and prone to depart from the strait path of rectitude. On this weakness let us not however rely for a justification of our deviations, but rather let it operate as an inducement to double our diligence and increase our caution. Then while we are conscious of having honestly and earnestly endeavoured to dischage the duties we owe to our Maker and to each other, we can

look with more confidence to our great Creator for pardon of our past transgressions and strength to preserve us from a repetition of them.

In our observations thus far we have chiefly endeavoured to convince you, that on your own conduct depends your prosperity and happiness, but be assured the consequences do not rest there. The greater portion of your brethren still remains in bondage. One great obstacle to their release, it is in your power and it is eminently your duty to remove; the enemies of your liberty have loudly and constantly asserted that you are not qualified to enjoy it, that your proneness to dissipation, your inattention to your particular concerns, and your disregard of the interests of each other, will ever produce your own wretchedness and lasting mischief to those among whom you dwell: in what degree the imputations may be just we leave to your own candour to decide; but we cannot leave the subject without conjuring you to remove, by the utmost circumspection of conduct, the causes that have been and continue to be urged against you; and thereby contribute your part towards the liberation of such of your fellow men as yet remain in the shackles of Slavery.

The education of your offspring is a subject of lasting importance, and has obtained a large portion of our attention and care. In this too we call upon you for your aid; many of you have been favoured to acquire a comfortable portion of property, and are consequently enabled to contribute in some measure to the means of educating your offspring. While you thus benefit your own, you will also confer a favour on the children of those who are indigent; in as much as there will remain a large pro-

portion of other funds to be applied to their improvment.

Having thus fully communicated our sentiments on subjects the most important to your present. and eternal welfare, we beg you to give them your close attention, and sincerely wish you that happiness which is consistent with the will of an all-wise and protecting Providence.

A resolution, relative to the African Slave-Trade, was read, and after some discussion, referred to Timothy Paxson, Joseph Bringhurst, jun. Rudolph Bunner, and Josiah Reeve, to report thereon, at our next sitting.

Adjourned till to-morrow morning at 11 oclock.

January 17th, 11 o'clock A. M.

Convention met, pursuant to adjournment:

PRESENT:....

GERSHOM CRAFT....PRESIDENT.

Walter Morton,	Timothy Paxson,
William T. Slocum,	Cyrus Newlin,
Rudolph Bunner,	William Poole,
Josiah Reeve,	Joseph Bringhurst, jun.
William Jones,	Othniel Alsop.

The committee to whom was referred the resolution on the African Slave-trade, offered the following report, which was read, considered, and adopted.

The committee appointed to report on the propriety of raising a fund for the prosecution of persons employed in the Slave-trade, report the following resolution, viz.

Resolved, That the Acting Committee be authorised and directed to open a correspondence with the Abolition Societies, and other friends of the freedom of the blacks in the United States, in order to create an efficient fund, to be applied to the prosecution of persons illegally engaged in the Slave-trade. And when such funds are raised, they are also authorised to employ an agent or agents, for the purpose of discovering the violations of the laws of the United States, relative to the Slave-trade, and reporting thereon to the said committee, who, thereupon, may act as to them shall seem proper.

The following communication from the Abolition Society of Rhode Island, intended for the Acting Committee, and received during the sitting of this Convention, was read, and referred to that committee.

Providence, First Month 7th, 1805.

Respected Friend,

THY letter dated the 10th of November, to M. Brown, came duly to hand, and this day has been presented to the society. And although the infringement of personal liberty, in New-England, has so nearly ceased, as not to require so much attention of the society as heretofore; yet there still are some cases, wherein the interference of the society, or its individual members, is necessary, and has been usefully applied; and divers have obtained

and preserved their liberties thereby, since our last communication to the Convention.

There are two species of foreign commerce, which some of our citizens are concerned in....that to Africa for slaves to foreign ports, and for South Carolina; this has generally been carried on in a circuitous manner, so as to render it difficult to procure proof, yet divers vessels have been condemned, and sold in this state, some of them indeed by complaints from some of the friends of the concerned in order to save the forfeiture. The practice of taking on board slaves at one island and carrying them to the Havannah for sale and trade, has been discovered in some instances, and conviction has followed in several actions in our courts, but the failure in others has occasioned discouragement to so general a pursuit and prosecution, as otherwise might have been the case; the violence used in some cases, on those who have been complainants, has tended also to lessen that pursuit of those who violate the laws which otherwise would have been made. Most of those concerned in the oppressive commerce, having been successful in the mammon of unrighteousness, and thereby acquired *a forcible* influence, which the peaceable and legal measures of the society, are not able to counteract. There are, however, a considerable number of our members and others, who remain firm in principles and desires for a total stop to be put to all commerce in our fellow-men, and would gladly unite in all legal and peaceable measures to effect so desirable an object. There is, however, one subject which at this time takes our particular attention, and which, we should not discharge our duty, if we did not lay before the Convention, that of the Louisiana petition for a repeal of the act prohibiting

the importation of slaves into that country, and as we observe the subject has been brought before Congress, we have thought it incumbent on us, at this meeting, to address the several members of this society, and express our concern on that subject, and to request their attention and influence in opposing any indulgence as to the admission of slaves in that country, believing it to be highly improper in a political, and much more so in a moral sense; and we hope the Convention will be favoured to unite in such measures, by address or otherwise, as will effectually bar the inhabitants from expecting slaves will ever be allowed to be imported there.

We have no funds belonging to our society, and therefore no schools for the education of the blacks under the government of the society, yet divers schools have been held by the subscriptions of individual members.

Your observation on the formation of our societies, and of the effect of the united efforts of our New-England brethren to wipe away the stain on our national character, and indeed to deter those inclined to violate the statutes of the country, we hope are well founded; and hope the solicitude you manifest for the exertion of our influence will serve as a fresh excitement to perseverance in a steady pursuit of the great object, and your brotherly information and co-operation, so cheerfully offered, we trust, will contribute thereto, and to a free communication of our Acting Committee on all necessary occasions.

In this state, three valuable vessels, returning from slave voyages, have been libelled and condemned by collusion to the use of the former own-

ers, under the clause of the law directing the court to condemn the whole to the use of the libelants. Would it not be useful if the law could be so altered, as that some part should go to the use of the United States in all cases?

The severity of the season, and length of the journey, renders it difficult to prevail with any to attend the Convention as representatives.

By order and in behalf of a special meeting of the Society for abolishing the Slave Trade, &c. held at Providence, 7th of First Month, (called January) 1805.

DANIEL HOWEL, *President.*

To James Milnor, Chairman of the American Convention at Philadelphia.

Resolved, that the second section of the fifth article of the constitution be erased, and the following substituted, viz.

All orders drawn upon the treasury, shall be signed by the Chairman, and attested by the Secretary of the Acting Committee.

Resolved, that the Acting Committee have printed, One thousand copies of the address to the free blacks, and other free people of colour....Five hundred of the minutes of this Convention, and as many as they shall judge necessary of the circular address, and that they have them transmitted in the usual proportions, to the different Abolition Societies.

Resolved, that the said committee present the thanks of this Convention, to the president of the

select council of the city of Philadelphia, for the use of their chamber, during this session.

Resolved, that the Acting Committee be directed to give the several Abolition societies, three months previous notice of the time of meeting of the Convention, and that they request each society to enjoin its delegates to attend the meetings of the Convention, punctually, during the whole session.

Adjourned sine die.

Published by order of the Convention,

OTHNIEL ALSOP, SEC'RY.

APPENDIX.

AN ACT

FOR THE

GRADUAL ABOLITION

OF

SLAVERY.

SEC. I. BE *it enacted by the Council and General Assembly of this State, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same,* That every child born of a slave within this state, after the fourth day of July next, shall be free; but shall remain the servant of the owner of his or her mother, and the executors, administrators, or assigns of such owner, in the same manner as if such child had been bound to service by the trustees or overseers of the poor, and shall continue in such service, if a male, until the age of twenty-five years, and if a female until the age of twenty-one years.

2. *And be it enacted*, That every person being an inhabitant of this state, who shall be entitled to the service of a child born as aforesaid, after the said fourth day of July next, shall within nine months after the birth of such child, cause to be delivered to the clerk of the county whereof such person shall be an inhabitant, a certificate in writing, containing the name and addition of such person, and the name, age, and sex of the child so born; which certificate, whether the same be delivered before

or after the said nine months, shall be by the said clerk recorded in a book to be by him provided for that purpose; and such record thereof shall be good evidence of the age of such child; and the clerk of such county shall receive from said person twelve cents for every child so registered: and if any person shall neglect to deliver such certificate to the said clerk within the said nine months, such person shall forfeit and pay for every such offence, five dollars, and the further sum of one dollar for every month such person shall neglect to deliver the same, to be sued for and recovered by any person who will sue for the same, the one half to the use of such prosecutor, and the residue to the use of the poor of the township in which such delinquent shall reside.

3. *And be it enacted*, That the person entitled to the service of any child born as aforesaid, may, nevertheless within one year after the birth of such child, elect to abandon such right; in which case a notification of such abandonment, under the hand of such person, shall be filed with the clerk of the township, or where there may be a county poor-house established, then with the clerk of the board of trustees of said poor-house of the county in which such person shall reside; but every child so abandoned shall be maintained by such person until such child arrives to the age of one year, and thereafter shall be considered as a pauper of such township or county, and liable to be bound out by the trustees or overseers of the poor in the same manner as other poor children are directed to be bound out, until, if a male, the age of twenty-five, and if a female, the age of twenty-one; and such child, while such pauper, until it shall be bound out, shall be maintained by the trustees or overseers of the poor of such county or township, as the case

may be, at the expence of this state; and for that purpose the director of the board of chosen freeholders of the county is hereby required, from time to time, to draw his warrant on the treasurer in favor of such trustees or overseers for the amount of such expence, not exceeding the rate of three dollars per month; provided the accounts for the same be first certified and approved by such board of trustees, or the town committee of such township; and every person who shall omit to notify such abandonment as aforesaid, shall be considered as having elected to retain the service of such child, and be liable for its maintenance until the period to which its servitude is limited as aforesaid.

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